

Oldest Bible texts discovered show scripture hasn't changed

JERUSALEM, Israel (EP) — Translation of two cigarette-sized silver amulets found in an ancient tomb show that at least some of the prayers of ancient Judaism remain prayers today, virtually word for word.

Prior to the 20th Century, the oldest known texts dated to the 10th Century A.D. In 1903 the Nasy Papyrus was published, based on a single papyrus fragment which included the Ten Commandments and a liturgical prayer, dating to around 100 B.C. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in the late 1940s, contained even older biblical texts, dating to the late Third Century B.C. The newly-translated amulets have been dated by translator Gabriel Barkay to the Seventh Century B.C.

The part deciphered on one of the amulets is the priestly benediction found in Numbers 6:24-26, almost identical to the Masoretic text in use today: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace." The other amulet compacts the benediction. With the exception of isolated words, the remaining text of the amulets remains undeciphered.

The rolled-up amulets were part of a treasure hoard discovered in 1979 by Barkai in a First Temple period family tomb opposite Mount Zion. It took three years for technical experts from the Israel Museum to open the fragile amulets. The writing is very faint, and recovery of the text has been assisted by enlarged photographs, special lighting, and microbinoculars.

A break in the translation of the fragments came when draughtswoman Ada Yardeni mentioned to a religious colleague that the passage contained the name of God three times. "Three times? Maybe it's the priestly benediction," he guessed correctly.

The amulets had holes for strings, and were evidently worn around the neck and buried with their owners. The amulets are the only ones ever found from the biblical period.

Ethiopia volunteer counters magazine's allegations

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (BP) — A Southern Baptist volunteer from Florida has disputed generalizations of misuse of hunger relief funds printed in the October issue of Reader's Digest.

Ed Mason, who has administered Southern Baptist famine relief efforts in Ethiopia since January 1985, said he is distressed organizations from various countries "were painted with the same broad brush" in a Digest article titled, "Famine Aid: Were We Duped?"

Mason, of Tallahassee, is a former president of the Florida Baptist Convention and a former state public service commissioner. He also served volunteer stints in Ethiopia as business manager of the Southern Baptist mission in 1976-77 and 1982-83.

In an open letter to Southern Baptists who contributed to Ethiopian hunger relief, Mason wrote, "To say that you . . . were tricked or misinformed as to how your contributions were being used is, to say the least, inaccurate and unjustified."

The Reader's Digest article was written by Rony Brauman of Doctors Without Borders, a French humanitarian group that once worked in Ethiopia.

Money, food and equipment to aid starving people, Brauman claimed, were "hijacked" by officials of the Marxist-backed Ethiopian government to buttress a massive, politically motivated resettlement program.

No Southern Baptist relief workers or funds have been involved in resettlement, Mason noted. Southern Baptist mission efforts, in seeking to meet human spiritual and physical needs, avoid political disputes, he said.

Mason acknowledged, "I cannot say there has not been some mismanagement in some . . . feeding programs

in Ethiopia. Possibly there has been some skimming of the aid by government representatives and by some NGOs (non-government organizations)."

But to Southern Baptist donors, he wrote, "Please know that your dollars were spent for the purpose for which they were given." About \$4.7 million in hunger relief donations by Southern Baptists have been spent fighting Ethiopia's famine.

Five feeding stations with medical clinics in rugged canyon regions more than 100 miles north of Addis Ababa are operated by about 20 Southern Baptist volunteers and numerous Ethiopian co-workers, all supervised by three career missionary couples in the country.

As to other organizations involved in famine relief, Mason observed, "I know from a personal acquaintance with most of them they are dedicated and committed people with one goal — that of alleviating human suffering. Literally hundreds of thousands of lives have been spared and unnumbered children have been returned to health through . . . the food and supplies sent to Ethiopia," Mason wrote. Governments and various groups in numerous countries, along with millions of individual donors, "have made possible a mighty humanitarian effort, the likes of which probably have never before been seen anywhere in the world."

Southern Baptists are continuing to provide rations of grain, milk powder, and cooking oil to about 100,000 rural subsistence farmers and their families, he noted.

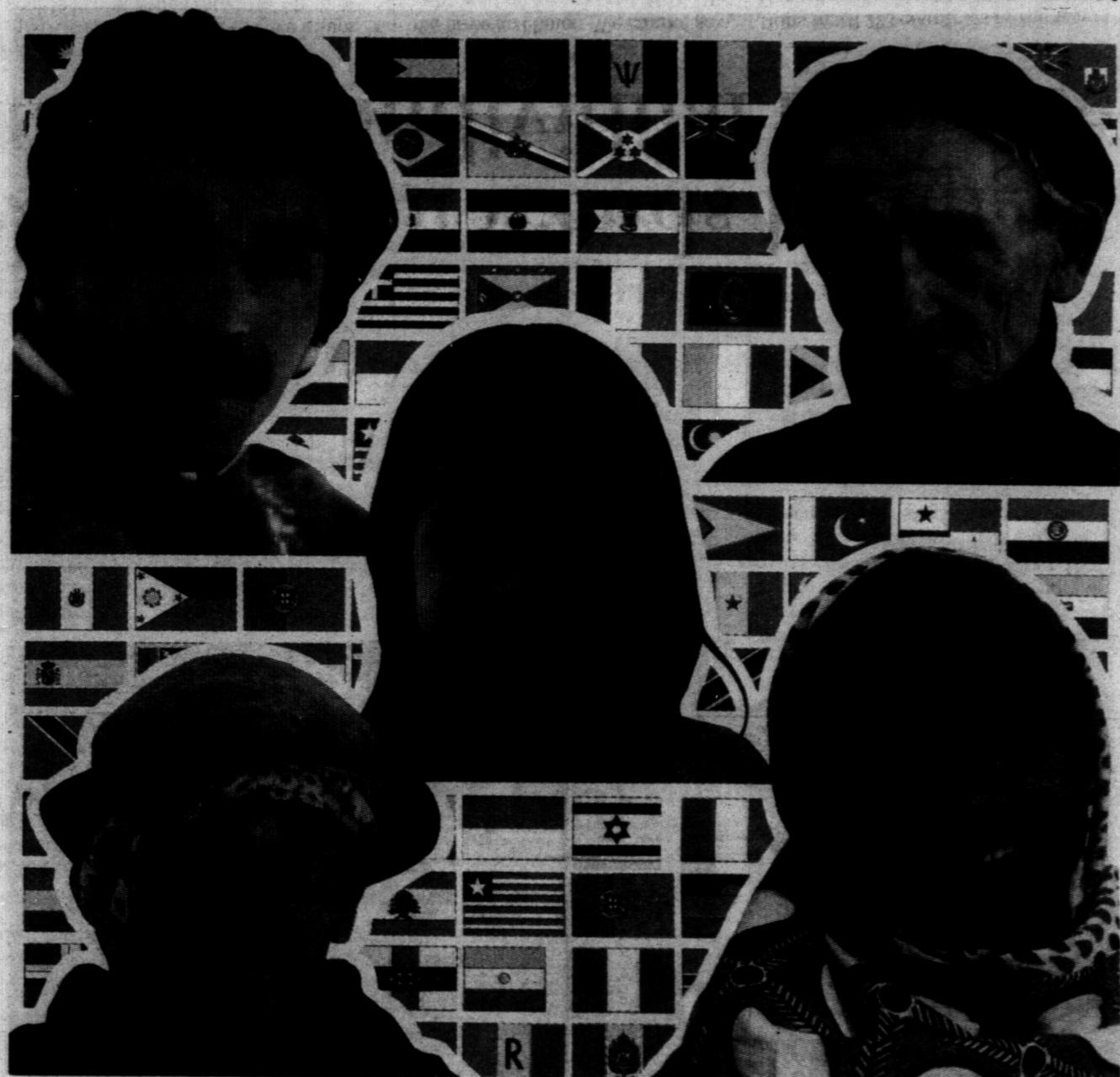
"The war against famine is not yet won," Mason said. "Adults now have strength to work their farms," but even after major harvests this month and next, food for 10,000 to 15,000 people may be needed.

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, November 27, 1986

Published Since 1877



WE MUST MAKE CHRIST KNOWN

Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions

November 30 through December 7, 1986

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

National Goal: \$75,000,000

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

Population trends highlight need for individual response

By Craig Bird

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Five billion people is a number too difficult to be grasped by most individuals.

Yet on July 7, 1986, the number of people on Earth exceeded 5 billion, according to the Population Institution in Washington, D.C.

Seventy-five million dollars sounds like a large number too — until it is compared to those 5 billion people.

Southern Baptist foreign missionaries are well aware of the need for greater spiritual and financial resources to meet the rapidly-growing needs.

"We have no choice. We cannot say, 'I might do it or I might not do it.' We must do it and we must do it now and with all possible haste," explains Charles Collins, Guatemala.

Collins' words are underscored by more stunning statistics from the Population Reference Bureau. Each hour of 1986 the population is increasing by more than 9,000. Each minute 258 people are born and 101 die.

Christianity is on the move, impressively so, according to Foreign Mission Board figures. There are Christians and Christian congrega-

tions in all 223 countries of the world. Persons who identify themselves as Christians comprise the majority in two-thirds of the countries.

But since 1900, the estimated percentage of Christians in the world population has declined from 34.4 to 32.8. And the gap is widening.

The \$75 million Lottie Moon offering goal (up \$5 million from the 1985 receipts) could be reached by an average gift of less than \$5 from each of the 15 million members of SBC churches.

Craig Bird writes for FMB.

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President Rogers seeks “very best Baptists”

By Dan Martin

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian Rogers has issued a call for recommendations of the “very best Baptists” to serve on committees at the 1987 annual meeting.

In an “Open Letter to Southern Baptists” issued through Baptist Press, Rogers announced the beginning of choosing nominees for the 1987 Committee on Committees, and the Resolutions, Credentials, and Tellers Committees.

“It is my desire to choose the very best Southern Baptists for these positions. This will be accomplished most effectively with your prayerful support and personal recommendations under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

“We welcome recommendations from every corner of Southern Baptist work.”

Under the constitution of the Southern Baptist Convention, the president appoints the Committee on Committees, Resolutions Committee and Credentials Committee “in con-

ference with” the two vice presidents and the Tellers Committee “in consultation with” the convention’s registration secretary.

First vice president is Jack Stanton of Bolivar, Mo.; second vice president is Ray Roberts of Asheville, N.C.; and registration secretary is Lee Porter of Nashville, Tenn.

Rogers, who was elected to the presidency first in 1979 and then again at the 1986 annual meeting in Atlanta, is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis.

The appointment process has been at the center of the seven-year controversy in the nation’s largest non-Catholic denomination. The president appoints the Committee on Committees, which nominates the Committee on Boards, which, in turn, nominates the persons who will be trustees and committee members of the 20 national agencies of the SBC.

Several efforts have been made in recent years to force the president to nominate the Committee on Commit-

tees from a pool of persons suggested by state Baptist convention executives or to select the sitting presidents of state conventions and presidents of state Woman’s Missionary Unions as committee members. Each of the efforts has failed.

An effort to substitute state convention and WMU presidents, which was ruled out of order at the 1985 annual meeting, is at the center of a federal court lawsuit that was won by the SBC but is now in a federal appeals court.

Recently, moderates challenged Rogers to appoint state presidents and state WMU presidents as the Committee on Committees. The challenge was made by James Slatton, pastor of River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.; Norman Cavender, a layman from Claxton, Ga.; and Winfred Moore, pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, and a twice unsuccessful moderate candidate for SBC president.

Rogers told Baptist Press he wrote
(Continued on page 13)



Brazilian choir will sing in Hattiesburg

First Church, Hattiesburg will present the CORAL SINFONICO, choir of the North Brazil Baptist Theological Seminary, Recife, Brazil, in concert on Dec. 9, at 7 p.m.

This choral group of 40 voices is on tour in the USA. “Its primary objectives are to increase interest in world mission opportunities, especially in Brazil, to share Brazilian sacred indigenous music, and to help seminary students gain a wider view of Baptist work, its scope and potential,” said Fred Spann, director of the Music Department at the seminary.

The CORAL SINFONICO (Symphonic Choir) has had a 24 year history of singing in churches, universities and theaters in practically all of the states in Brazil.

The members of this choir are, in large part, students and faculty of South America’s oldest (1902) and largest (800 students) evangelical seminary. Its music department was begun in 1959 having, currently, 250 seminary students studying towards the Bachelor of Church Music degree.

During its tour, the choir will present special foreign mission chapel

services in four Southern Baptist seminaries, assist in promotion of world mission efforts in 12 states, and share Brazilian music (sacred, folk and popular) on several Baptist university campuses. They sang in 1980 at First Church, Jackson.

“Those attending the concert should acquire a feel for the thrilling Latin American rhythms, become acquainted with interesting contemporary Brazilian musical sounds, and hear traditional sacred music compositions as well,” said Spann. The public is invited.

India Mission weathers funds freeze; gets money

By Marty Croll

NEW DELHI, India (BP) — After weathering a four-month government freeze on foreign support, Baptist work in India has been freed to use \$289,000 for evangelism and health care.

About three-fourths of the money was transferred in mid-November into the treasury of the organization of Southern Baptist missionaries in India, known as the Indian Baptist mission, after the government approved two separate requests for the mission to receive operating funds from outside the nation.

Another request, for \$69,000, was made only after the Baptist hospital in Bangalore applied as an institution to receive funds directly from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board instead of through the mission treasury. As late as Nov. 21, the mission was awaiting the arrival of that money from the board, which sent it by special courier to avoid a telecommunications strike in the country.

The hospital has been the center of Southern Baptist mission efforts in the southern state of Karnataka since the early 1970s.

Two additional requests for operating funds would carry the mission through March 1987 but have not yet been approved. Also, missionaries were planning to ask the government to allow the mission to receive funds on the basis of regular need, rather than applying beforehand and waiting up to four months for each approval, said missionary Rebekah Naylor.

The problem began in June when missionaries learned the Indian government was putting a freeze on contributions from outside the country.

They were told they must apply in the future each time they receive Southern Baptist funds. They were told then to accept no further money

from the Foreign Mission Board unless it was first approved by the central government. Approval can take up to four months.

An audit further complicated affairs of the mission, which has faced increasingly complex struggles to keep missionaries on the field with approved visas. The number of missionaries assigned to live permanently on the field has dropped from 23 in 1983 to five at present.

Naylor, the hospital administrator, must apply for visa renewal in December. Visa renewal still is pending for David Travis, an agricultural professor at a national institution, and his wife, Glenda, who applied in June. A newly appointed missionary, pediatrician Cindy Howard, soon will apply for a visa, also. No new visas have been granted for Southern Baptist missionaries to India in six years.

To survive during the recent freeze on funds, the Indian mission curtailed and combined Baptist programs in the country so it could fund evangelism efforts and keep the hospital running. Missionary salaries, deposited in stateside banks by the Foreign Mission Board, were not affected.

The requests most recently approved were for \$150,000 and \$70,000, Naylor said. Missionaries applied for the former amount as soon as they were notified of the audit. The Foreign Mission Board finance office was forwarding the \$70,000 to the mission treasury when the mission learned it could accept no more outside money.

Located near the southern tip of India, the Bangalore hospital has been the hub around which a convention of more than 250 churches has grown. More than 200 of those have been started during the past three years.

Marty Croll writes for the FMB.

Parks visits China, finds spiritual depth

By Erich Bridges

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The Christians of China “have as much to offer us as we have to offer them,” insisted Southern Baptist mission leader R. Keith Parks, back from a two-week visit to China.

Chinese Christians, he discovered, also have something many believers in the West lack — a great spiritual depth born of hardship.

“I went to China to try to learn from them,” Parks, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reported upon his return. “I feel the Christians there have learned something about the Christian experience because of what they’ve been through that most of us have not learned.”

Parks and his wife, Helen Jean, visited Christian leaders, pastors and churches in Guangzhou, Shanghai, Nanjing, Xian and Beijing in late October and early November. Accompanying them were Charles Bryan, the Foreign Mission Board’s head of

overseas operations, and his wife, Martha.

Cooperative Services International Director Lewis Myers and his associates, Britt Towery and Jack Shelby, also traveled with the group, along with their wives. Myers, a Mississippian, spoke of the trip during the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Southern Baptists now relate to Chinese Christians through Cooperative Services International, an office formed in 1985 to help the denomination assist Christians and others in countries where missionaries do not work.

Christian missionaries, including Southern Baptists, left China early in the Communist era.

China suffered during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, and Chinese Christians suffered with their nation. Radicals persecuted intellectuals, art-

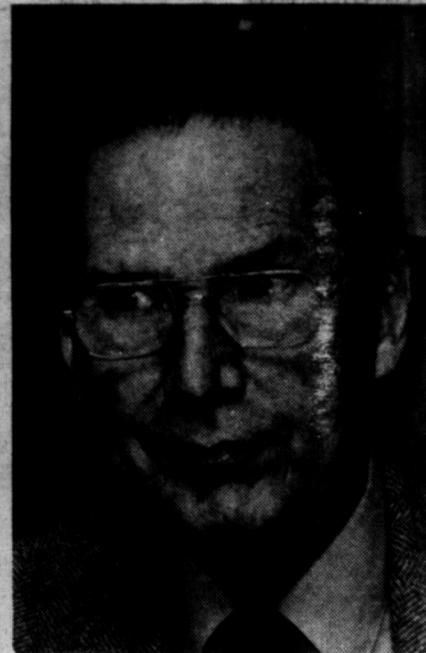
(Continued on page 6)



Paul J. Pryor



J. Ralph Noonkester



Paul N. Nunnery



E. Harold Fisher



W. Lewis Nobles

Convention honors heads of institutions

The Mississippi Baptist Convention on Monday evening honored the heads of its five institutions, expressing appreciation for their combined 125 years of service to Mississippi Baptists. Scrolls citing their accomplishments were given to each.

A visual production was

presented by Robert Wall of the Mississippi College staff while the following script, compiled by Anne McWilliams, assistant editor, *The Baptist Record*, was read by Graham Smith, associate pastor and music minister at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.

achieve full accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. This took place only four years after the institution changed over to coed from being Mississippi Woman's College.

Noonkester adapted a university system to the college by developing graduate and professional programs in music, church vocations, business administration, education, nursing, and medical technology.

In 30 years he has built the enrollment from 374 to 2,900, working in 40 major fields on three campuses — in New Orleans and Gulfport as well as in Hattiesburg.

Through 30 consecutive years he has guided the college financial affairs without a budget deficit. He has been correctly called "a tireless fundraiser, a creative manager, a guardian of resources."

His excellence in scholarship and his generosity in community service have been widely recognized. Already possessing a doctor of theology degree from Southern Seminary, he has been awarded a doctor of laws degree from the University of Richmond (where in the Class of 1940 he was named Outstanding Graduate), and a doctor of humane letters degree from Blue Mountain College.

The City of Hattiesburg gave him its Hub City Award; the South Central Bar Association gave him its Liberty Award; the Mississippi Association of Colleges elected him president. He has served as a member of the Mississippi Committee for the Humanities and as chairman of the SBC Education Commission.

As an enlightened leader of Mississippi Baptists, a college administrator cognizant of his responsibilities to students, his constituency, his community, and his Lord, it is appropriate that we honor J. Ralph Noonkester today.

J. Ralph Noonkester was inaugurated as president of William Carey College thirty years ago, in 1956, at age 32. Before that, this Virginian had already worked for Mississippi Baptists four years at the same college, first as professor of Bible and then as dean.

This year, still building, he broke ground for the Medical Arts Plaza to be constructed on the site of the old Baptist Hospital.

He has held official positions with the House of Delegates of the American Hospital Association. He has served as president of the Mississippi Hospital Association and the Baptist Hospital Association.

Those who walk through the halls of the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center or lie in its beds may well say "Thank you" to Paul J. Pryor, a man of skill in administrative ability, a man of foresight, perseverance, and compassion.

J. Ralph Noonkester was inaugurated as president of William Carey College thirty years ago, in 1956, at age 32. Before that, this Virginian had already worked for Mississippi Baptists four years at the same college, first as professor of Bible and then as dean.

By the end of his second year as president, he had seen William Carey

Law, he has for the past 26 years devoted himself wholeheartedly to the care of youths entrusted to him.

Mississippi communities have changed over those years, and the Village programs have unfolded to meet the needs those changes have produced. Nunnery, an innovative and sensitive administrator, has expanded and adjusted service ministries to meet the needs of today's troubled children, victims of abuse, neglect, or abandonment, or victims of parent-child relationships in their homes.

Under his hand, the cottage family lifestyle was introduced to replace the old dormitory style. Task oriented programming was added. This meant supplementary services such as preparation for independent living, intermediate care, and crisis intervention. Houseparents, social workers, administrators, ministers, therapists, and psychologists work as a team with programs selected to meet individual needs. Trained, professional Christian counselors and therapists touch the lives of from 500 to 600 boys and girls and their families annually.

Not the least of Nunnery's achievements with the Village has been the relocation and development of the central campus on Flag Chapel Drive in Jackson. This move made the cottage family concept possible. Also he has directed in the opening of additional group homes — at Farrow Manor, Reedy Acres, Dickerson Place, Deanash, and New Albany — besides foster family boarding homes in almost every area of the state.

In recent years, under his guidance, the Village has worked with the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center to make help available for youths who are chemically dependent.

As steward of financial resources, he has provided leadership in planning as he watched the budget grow from \$139,000 to more than \$1,975,000.

He brought national attention to the Baptist Children's Village as "the first child care agency in the deep south to be accredited by the National Association of Homes For Children." He led in its licensing by the state.

Child Care Executives of Southern Baptists have honored him by electing him as their president. It has been said that "he is a big man physically, but is intellectually disciplined to observe the minute. He laughs often at himself and with others, but is unapologetically serious about the

challenges of life."

Mississippi Baptists pause tonight to say thank you to Paul N. Nunnery for his long years of sterling service, and to say thank you to God for sending him this way.

Of his 28-year professional career, E. Harold Fisher has spent 21 years at Blue Mountain College. He shouldered its presidency July 1, 1965, at age 34.

He went to that position from one as assistant director of the Division of Instruction and supervisor of elementary education for Mississippi's state Department of Education. He was born in Mississippi. His doctorate in supervision and curriculum improvement he earned from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Due to the high degree of his commitment to education, he has provided the highest caliber leadership for Blue Mountain, and for the state and region as well. With a sure hand, he has improved and expanded the education program of Blue Mountain College, adding a bachelor of science degree in education, a church related vocations major, a medical technology program, an honors program, and various other courses to the school's curricula.

Under his leading, faculty and staff salaries have increased so that they now approach a regional average. Significant increases have been recorded in gifts to the college, in scholarship funds, and in endowment funds.

In the two decades of his presidency the enrollment of the college has remained relatively stable at a time when increased competition existed for a declining number of high school graduates.

Because he saw the need, two buildings were constructed on the Blue Mountain campus, Cockcroft Dormitory in 1968 and Paschal Student Center in 1970. Other buildings have been renovated and modernized.

Fisher's voice has been heard and his influence felt in education circles nationwide. He was president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1971-72, and was one of the association's trustees longer than any educator in the southern region. He has been president of the Southern Association of Colleges for Women, and vice-president of the Association

(Continued on page 5)

Convention honors

(Continued from page 4)

of Southern Baptist Colleges. In April of this year he was elected to the Board of Directors of the National School Boards Association, the first Mississippian to be thus honored.

He is a brilliant, dedicated, competent administrator. Mississippi Baptists salute E. Harold Fisher.

In July of 1968, W. Lewis Nobles, a pharmaceutical chemist, became the eighth president of Mississippi College since Baptists took it over in 1850.

Nobles moved to Clinton from Oxford, where he began his professional career as assistant in the School of Pharmacy at University of Mississippi and rose to dean of the graduate school and coordinator of university research. From his straight A high school days in his hometown of Meridian through the receipt of his Ph.D. degree from the University of Kansas, he was a phenomenally good student. He was a National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan in 1958-59.

The magic touch of Lewis Nobles has been felt in every phase of the life of Mississippi College. Under his superior leadership, enrollment has increased, the faculty has been strengthened and enlarged, new academic offerings have been instituted, off-campus program have been initiated, and reorganization has taken place in both academic and administrative areas, adapting a university structure to the college.

A School of Nursing and School of Law have been established.

Nobles has demonstrated ability as a fund raiser, leading through several successful capital funds campaigns.

He has led in building programs — erection of the Learning Resources Center, the Cockcroft Nursing and Home Economics Building, the A. E. Wood Coliseum, Robinson-Hale Stadium, and other improvements. He led in acquisition of the School of Law facility in downtown Jackson.

Nobles has served as trustee of New Orleans Seminary. He is a popular lay speaker. He is co-author of several textbooks. Since he has been Mississippi College president, numerous awards of recognition have come his way.

Nobles was recently identified by his peers as being among the 18 most effective college presidents in the United States. His selection was based on a two-year project funded by the Exxon Education Foundation entitled "The Effective College President."

During his tenure of service the 160-year-old college has continued to be a pacesetter among educational institutions of the state and nation. Mississippi Baptists have chosen to honor him tonight, and to express sincere gratitude to W. Lewis Nobles.

As a resolution at last year's convention suggested, these administrators have "with limited controversy and absence of moral scandal," not only expanded facilities and developed programs, but have also "given a strong Christian witness and have ministered to thousands of people to the glory of God."



R. L. and Beth Sigrest of Yazoo City were featured music leaders during the Pastors' Conference.



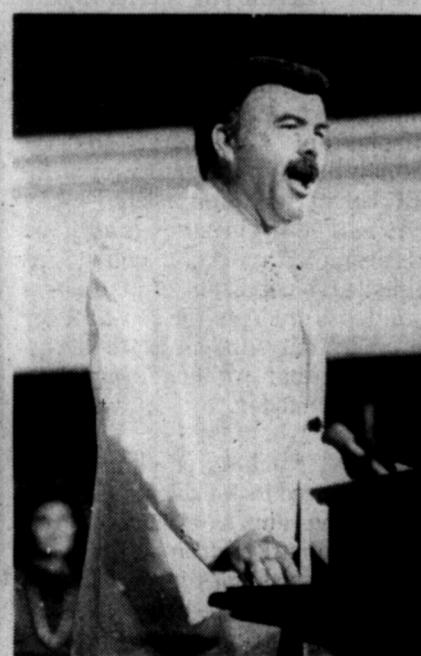
Bernie Parker, minister of music at First Church, Columbia, sings with his daughter, Lori.



The senior adult choir of First Church, Clinton, sings. Member Charlie Williams at right, is soloist.



David Oliver, Crossgates Church, Brandon.



Graham Smith, Morrison Heights Church, Clinton.



Tanner Riley, First Church, Starkville.



Gary Anglin, First Church, Pascagoula.



News and Information from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

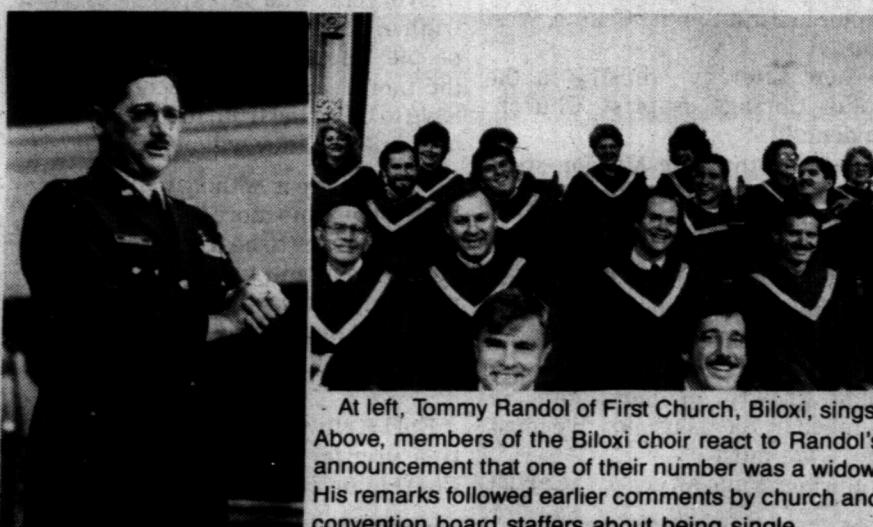
Convention music



First Church, Natchez



Leake County Youth



At left, Tommy Randol of First Church, Biloxi, sings. Above, members of the Biloxi choir react to Randol's announcement that one of their number was a widow. His remarks followed earlier comments by church and convention board staffers about being single.



Singing Churchmen

Book Reviews

THE COMPLEX MINISTRY OF RURAL CHURCH PASTORS: Thrasher, Kenneth C., A.M.G. Publishers, (Chattanooga, TN).

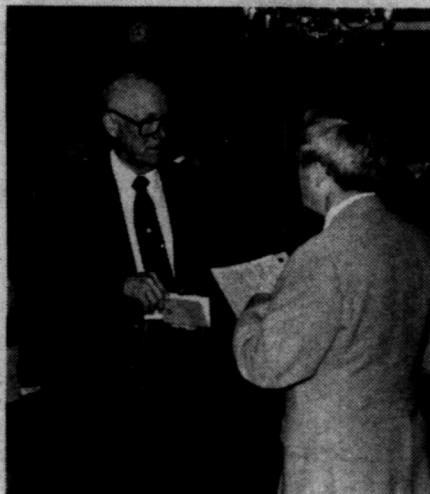
The author is a pastor of Winterboro Baptist Church, Winterboro, Ala. He was born and reared on Sand Mountain. He grew up in rural churches and has pastored several rural churches in Alabama.

The book is practical. As most pastors know who have pastored rural churches in the past, rural churches are different! They have the same mandate to evangelism and discipleship as that of "First Baptist Church," have many of the same needs, and go about doing things in many of the same ways. However, there are differences.

In the book the author covers a wide range of topics from "The Rural Church and Its Changing Community" to "The Rural Church and Worship" to "The Rural Church and Organization" to the "The Rural Church and the Pastor's Family." Many other topics are discussed as well.

I can't honestly say any "new" material was uncovered in this book. If you've read books on organization in the past, you have probably covered every area the author will cover. For a young man going to a rural church pastorate for the first time, it would be a good book to read.

Reviewed by Gregory E. Potts, Pastor Bluff Springs Church, Magnolia.



Lowery Compere and Ralph Noonkester talk in the fellowship hall of First, Jackson, during the convention. Compere, retired, is a former president of Clarke College. Noonkester is William Carey president.



Parkway Church, Jackson



Steve Higdon, left, Baptist Sunday School Board, and Rodrick Conerly, missionary to Peru, man adjoining display booths.

Parks

(Continued from page 3) tists, religious people, and many other groups during those years. China now openly acknowledges the period was a national tragedy.

During their visit, Parks and his wife made a point of asking individual Christians which Bible passages had helped them most during the dark days.

"I think without exception they all mentioned the 23rd Psalm," he said.

The fact that Christians did suffer along with millions of others, however, accomplished something the church had long prayed for. "It caused the Christians to be identified with the Chinese people," Parks said.

Parks came away from China with several other impressions:

— Growth and activity. China as a whole seems to be preoccupied with construction and forward movement. In the churches, most of the pastors "would say (they had) baptized 1,100 or 1,300, or 1,500. Every one of them was reporting those kind of baptisms," along with multiple, overcrowded worship services, Bible studies and prayer meetings.

— Openness. He said he sensed no "restriction or surveillance" among Christians or in public.

— Urgency among Christians. "I was impressed with the sense of urgency they have in training leadership, recognizing that most of their leaders are old. They've opened 10 seminaries now with a total of 500 students, roughly. . . . They are preparing for the future of Christianity in China, and they're pretty excited about that future."

— Cooperation. Chinese Christians, he said, are open to working with overseas Christians who are "willing to accept them . . . work with them on the basis of a post-denominational, post-missionary stance . . . and respond to meeting needs that they define."

Parks said he had expected to feel an overwhelming emotional impact on his first visit to China. Instead, he felt "unexpectedly at home" there, perhaps because of his many years of mission work among Chinese elsewhere in Asia.

Erich Bridges writes for the Foreign Mission Board.

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NEEDED: Donation, pews or theater seats for black church, burned and rebuilt, Sunflower, MS 38778. Contact Mayor Joel Parker, (601) 569-3315.



Edna Evans, First Church, Jackson, gets acquainted with a little boy named Dallas. Mrs. Evans was one of the nursery workers during the convention.

Bold New Growth/Mississippi

(Continued from page 4) charge, there is no end to the new units that they could help create.

We must develop an evangelistic church program which focuses on disciple making rather than decision making.

Also, we need to teach our people to celebrate the new life God has given us in Christ through public worship. I realize going to churches does not make someone a Christian; but it is the proper environment for the worship, spiritual growth, fellowship, and ministry of one who has become a Christian. Not only the worship service but the other units of people involved within a church structure grow as people commit themselves to Jesus Christ.

As a part of the development we need to emphasize the power for growth in new prayer units.

Prayer opened the prison doors for Peter (Acts 12).

Prayers of Elijah withheld rain for three and one half years and then caused the rain to come again (I Kings 17-18).

Prayer literally shook the early church (Acts 4:24-31).

Acts 17:11-12 shows us the importance of units to study the Word of God in the early church. We need new Sunday School classes that will consistently and thoroughly get people in-

volved in the study of God's word. The Bible tells us that faith can come only through hearing. It can also help us to see the needs of others. It helps us put feet to our prayers. It leads us to have the natural concerns that God has for people. Only as people are growing in faith do they have something to share with an unbelieving world. The reading of Matthew 25:34-40 indicates that the people have been so involved and their actions were so natural that they were not even conscious of what they were doing while they served. Yet, our Lord took note of what they had been doing.

In the day in which so many of us are caught up in the peer race for prominence, we need to be warned that the only lasting kingdom any of us can help build will be the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

We must lead our people to understand that believers are light in a dark world. The function of light is to shine. You can't keep light from shining, but you can cover it up. You can put it down in a hole somewhere instead of upon a hill.

When Jesus spoke about this problem, he may have been thinking about the Essene community of Qumran. They called themselves the children of light; but they had withdrawn from an evil, corrupt society to establish a pure, monastic

community near the Dead Sea. They might have been shining, but their light did not reach any body. Jesus did not want his disciples to be like that. Their light of love, acceptance, forgiveness, and commitment to God was to shine "among men." That's where the darkness was — the darkness of ignorance, lostness, alienation, prejudice, and hatred; and that is where the darkness is.

Christ calls us to live among sinners. We cannot flee from sinners, an impossibility to begin with because we ourselves are also sinners. He calls us to development so that we can show ourselves to be God's pilgrims in an alienation world.

III. New Units Will Strengthen Missions

In 1755 Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshall established the famous Sandy Creek Baptist Church in North Carolina. Within 17 years the church mushroomed from 16 to 616 members and sent out 125 ministers who in turn established 42 additional Baptist churches. That is strengthening missions. That is spreading abounding love toward all men.

New units for reaching people, developing believers, and strengthening missions are in the process of being formed right now.

Let me illustrate:
A new Youth Choir in New Hope

Baptist Church, Ashland.

A new Church Training group in the Dry Creek Baptist Church, Baldwin.

A new Crisis Ministry in the First Baptist Church, Columbus.

A new Baptist Men's unit in the First Baptist Church, Jackson.

A new Mission Bible Study sponsored by the Hux Baptist Church, Centerville.

A new Girls In Action unit in the Parkway Baptist Church, Jackson.

A new Baptist Young Women's organization in the Kittiwake Baptist Church, Pass Christian.

A new Jail Bible Study sponsored by the Baptist Men of First Baptist Church, Amory.

A new Pioneer Royal Ambassador Chapter in First Baptist Church, West Point.

A new Literacy Ministry in the Poplar Springs Baptist Church, Mendenhall.

A new Vietnamese Mission sponsored by the First Baptist Church, Moss Point.

A new church type mission in the Farmington Community by the Tate Street Baptist Church, Corinth.

A new Children's Choir in Faith Baptist Church, Hickory Flat.

Such growth projects can be multiplied by the thousands. We must grow — we must.

Some years ago an eccentric artist

died and left Holly Springs, Miss., a complete collection of her paintings which had been painted under the name, Freeman Clark. When the paintings were taken from a vault, where they had been in storage for 25 years, it was discovered that they were priceless. An expensive art gallery and vault were built to house them. Shortly after the gallery was opened, I was given a personal key to the building. I could take my friends there, day or night, and show them the exquisite pictures which hung on its walls. What a privilege was mine to share their beauty with my friends! Yet it was all made possible because I held a key.

Everyone who is exposed to the truth of Christ holds the key for other people. The more you think about it, the more alarming it becomes. We have to bring the truth to the lost men of our day or they will never hear it.

I think there is nothing in the world that bothers me more than this. I am just not worthy to be trusted with that key. I am afraid to go to the Judgment Day and have people point their fingers at me and say: "You held the key, and you failed to open the door for God."

Earl Kelly is executive secretary-treasurer for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Community church in Calif. votes SBC

GLENDALE, Calif. (BP) — The independent United Community Church of Glendale, Calif., has voted unanimously to affiliate with California Southern Baptists.

The \$7 million church facility, which sits on property larger than a city block, is comprised of a 2,200-seat amphitheater, chapel, garden fellowship building, educational and office facilities, and a full gymnasium.

With 800 members, the church automatically became one of the larger churches in the California convention. According to the convention's 1985 annual, average church membership in the convention is 292.

The "transdenominational" church made the decision in order to "maximize its efficiency for Christ" and become an integral part of the "great commission," said Pastor John Myrick.

"We didn't want to be an island unto ourselves," Myrick said. "We felt we could accomplish more for Christ in cooperation with other churches." The church also needed the resources of a mainline denomination to help with training and involvement of teachers and members, he added.

"We want to be part of the Cooperative Program," Myrick pointed out, referring to the church's desire to become part of a concerted effort to spread the gospel. The Cooperative Program is the Southern Baptist program of funding worldwide mission, education and evangelistic endeavors.

Don Francisco

First Baptist Church
Greenville, MS

Dec. 13, 1986 7:30 p.m.

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The new officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board are, from left, Larry Otis, secretary-treasurer, layman, Tupelo; Paul Stevens, president, pastor, Ridgecrest Church, Jackson; and Donald O'Quin, vice president, pastor, First Church, Charleston. New members of the Mississippi Baptist Executive Committee, elected by the convention board, include the three board officers and 13 others. They are Charles Nestor, Joseph Ratcliff, Gary Richardson, Ray Campbell, Ingram Foster, Harold Ishee, James Ruffin, Gayle Alexander, Jerry Mixon, Grady Collins, Bill Duncan, Dan Robertson, and W. W. Walley.



These are the officers of the Mississippi Baptist Church Music Conference. From left they are Chris Jenkins, president, minister of music at First Church, Gautier; Frank Stovall, vice president, chairman of the music department at Mississippi College; Dot Pray, secretary-treasurer, keyboard specialist with the Church Music Department, MBCB; and Dan Hall, ex officio, MBCB Church Music Department director. Officers not pictured are Ken Miller, president-elect, minister of music at First Church, Natchez; and Franklin Denham, Singing Churchmen representative, minister of music at Highland Church, Meridian.



These are the new officers of the Mississippi Baptist Education Commission. From left they are Secretary Bill Stewart, pastor, First Church, Eupora; Chairman Jim Street, pastor, First Church, Cleveland; and vice chairman Eddie Smith, president of East Central Junior College, Decatur.

In Bangladesh

"Without the Lottie Moon Offering, we're hamstrung"

By Tim Nicholas

Glenn Bien is special, and every year on his birthday he is reminded of it.

Bien and his wife Patt are Southern Baptist missionaries to Bangladesh; and Bien's birthday is Dec. 5, which usually falls within the Foreign Mission Board's Season of Prayer for foreign missions.

Furloughing in Coldwater, the Biens take time to talk of the effect of the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions on their lives.

Glenn says he has a special feeling knowing the great number of people who are praying for him on his birthday each year.

In language school in Dacca he recalls a classmate only half-joking when a big exam fell on Glenn's birthday that Glenn had an unfair edge over everyone else — getting prayed for on test day.

"I doubt that all missionaries get as much mail during and immediately following the Week of Prayer," says Bien, "but it's very reaffirming."

"Without the Lottie Moon offering," says Bien, "we're hamstrung." He adds, "We go overseas knowing there are some things we will do without," but the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon offering help provide what in the states are basics and overseas are luxuries.

"For example — electricity — with a generator we can guarantee

we have electricity," says Patt. The Lottie Moon offering helps provide for transportation. Glenn drives a Toyota 12 passengers micro bus — which allows his 6 foot 8 inch frame to fit inside. A four-story guest house in Dacca was also provided from Lottie Moon funds.

"Not only do we have adequate housing, but toilet facilities, ceiling fans, and adequate medical facilities," says Patt, who mentions friends who are faith missionaries who raise their own salaries and cannot afford their own transportation, or even screens for their windows. "It's these little things that make the difference for us," she says.

The Biens' ministry is to the Hindus, who are a 15 percent minority in the Muslim-dominated country. The specific ministry is to the low caste and outcast "poorest of the poor."

Bien ministers in two ways to the Hindus. He supervises the digging of tube wells for fresh water, and he witnesses in the villages. He doesn't witness in the villages where the wells are dug — not immediately — because of the possibility of what are called "rice Christians." Sometimes, in some countries, the people are so poor, anything they perceive as a gift will cause them to profess whatever the gift-giver is preaching. Southern Baptist missionaries want to avoid that possibility.

Last year Bien supervised the construction of 106 wells, which, to him, "is the most efficient use of world hunger funds," he says. The wells cost \$120-\$200, service 100 people, and last 15 years with minimal maintenance. "As a tube is dug, it is a seed planted — but a seed cast to the wind," says Bien. "We try to keep a distinction between the evangelistic work and the developmental work. Those who are the national preachers do not actually do the developmental work, because they cannot wear two hats," says Bien. "It confuses the people. We have baptized people who will say, 'Now we are Christian, you should support us.' These people go back to Hinduism."

Bien, who has a national staff of three ministers, says he hopes his witness will be long enough and consistent enough that "in, say, a six-year period a village will become Christian," he says. "It takes weekly, if not daily, witnessing for a person to accept Christ. But there's no way you can come in and in one simple presentation, turn a village around to Jesus because there's no trust level."

The Biens live with their children, Emily, 9, and Nathan, 6, in Jhenidah, a city of some 100,000 people. This, say the Biens is a responsive area where people will sit and listen to the claims of the gospel. Patt says a number of the villages where work has been



The Biens

started were discovered because someone told them that a cousin or sister needed to hear about Jesus.

The Biens explain that Southern Baptists are getting well known in the country. Last year, when a cyclonic storm washed away 10,000 people, the government asked the Southern Baptists to wait until the short term helpers were through. The government asked the Southern Baptists to help with rehabilitation projects such as rebuilding homes, replacing destroyed boats, fishing nets, farm implements, and draft and other farm animals, reclaiming ponds filled with sea water, and digging

tube wells. Bien said the big project was digging a new levee so the next storm would break the waves rather than causing such destruction. The total impact of about a year's work for Baptists was 281 new houses, 82 new boats, 86 new fishing nets, and 20 ponds cleaned of saline water. The Baptists locate a contractor or carpenter, supervise, purchase materials, and transport some. "We are the ones who ensure that it is properly done," says Bien. Incidentally, four of the eight couples assigned to Bangladesh are Mississippians. The others are Tom and Gloria Thurman, R.T. and Fran Buckley, and James and Guinevere Young.

This is the Biens' first furlough. They are staying in a house provided by family members. Her parents' church, First, Coldwater, gave them a pounding; and his home church, Mt. Zion, Independence, provided a washer, dryer, and other furniture; and a member is providing transportation.

The Biens work in a corner of the world that few Westerners ever see — their family are the only white people in a district of a million. "We know about William Carey's working seven years (in India) before that first convert," says Glenn. "Our first year out there we baptized seven; the second year we baptized 32." He adds, "We've been overwhelmed by God's blessing."

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

Lottie Moon goal

Editor:

We have a special blessing from God that we thought you might print in the Baptist Record.

Our WMU ladies recently set our goal for Lottie Moon Christmas offering at \$700, which is about \$100 above last year's goal. We decided that we'd do something different this year to reach our goal.

The WMU Director had a 14-piece nativity scene, and we divided our goal by this and came up with \$43 per piece. Each \$43 we received we'd add a piece to the nativity scene.

We announced this at church that we'd begin this Sunday night toward our goal. We showed a video, "Journey Home," about Lottie Moon and begin taking our offering.

To our pastor's surprise we reached and surpassed our goal! We weren't expecting this and realized it was the work of God among our people. We praise His name and thought this might be an idea and encouragement for other churches to hear about.

We are planning to continue to receive money for church and local missions until Christmas.

Paula Haynes, WMU Director
Grace Memorial Church
Tupelo

Not a disease

Editor:

I noticed in your Baptist Record a reply to the alcohol letter. My reply is the same. I am a Baptist minister's widow, and all of the alcoholics that I have talked with and prayed for say the difference is this: "I want my alcohol. I do not want a disease." The alcoholic must depend on the Lord. They can't quit alone. If more of our doctors would win these to Christ instead of falsely treating them for a disease, this world would be a great place to live. All types of alcohol are sin.

My prayer is always with you.
Mrs. Myrtle M. Carroll
Preston

Music is worship

Editor:

The Mississippi Baptist Convention was a totally new experience for me. As a lay person I had wondered just what went on. Don't get me wrong. I thought the program and business were taken care of in a most appropriate manner.

Frank Gunn and others in charge of the meeting did an excellent job as did all the speakers. However, I was disappointed in many of those in attendance (many of them pastors that I knew) who, when the choir sang, moved around and talked; not whispered, talked! It is my opinion that surely the message in song is as much a part of worship as is the spoken message and should be treated with reverence.

Name withheld by request

Amen. — Editor

Thanks for care

Editor:

Would you please print this letter of gratitude in the Baptist Record?

We entered a long, dark valley on Friday, Oct. 24, when Evan's neck was broken playing football. Although the valley has been long and will continue to be, it has not been a lonesome valley and will not be. Our precious heavenly Father has been so lovingly

and lastingly present. We readily and gratefully testify that "nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

There has been a phenomenal outpouring of love and concern toward us. So many individual believers and churches have reached out to us with concern, kindness, and compassion. Please accept this note of thanks as an expression of our deepest gratitude for each gift, visit, prayer, call, and everything else you've done in the lovely, lasting, and lofty name of Jesus.

Evan continues to be paralyzed from the neck down. He is making progress in his breathing and hopefully will be off the respirator in the next several days. He continues to fight on courageously, making us, his parents, very proud of him! We're depending on this spirit of determination and your prayers as we go into rehabilitation a few weeks from now.

There aren't enough words to express our gratitude to the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. We Southern Baptists of Mississippi should be grateful for this facility and its staff. We've been treated with kindness, compassion, and competency from every area of this hospital — the emergency room, security, chaplains, public relations, insurance, dietary services, gift shop, administration, volunteers, pediatrics ICU, nurses, and doctors. We've been on the

premises, night and day, for three weeks. We've had plenty of time to observe. We say, "Thank God for Mississippi Baptist Medical Center and its fine people."

John, Maggie, Matt,
and Evan Edwards
Meridian

"I will trust God"

Editor:

I have been reading the Baptist Record for over three years now, and I don't think that I have quite read a letter so unscriptural as this one of Oct. 16, 1986, "Care in calling staff." Whoever "Name withheld by request" is doesn't know the scriptures very well and would rather people look to the Southern Baptist Convention instead of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I would like to say that it is not the SBC that will cause the church to grow, and if it is only that it will be dead as a tomb; but it is when we use the Word of God and allow the Holy Spirit the freedom to move.

The person who wrote this letter talked about a call to the altar for the sick in the church with the staff to lay hands on them. James 5:14; says, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." My wife is in surgery as I write this letter, and

(Continued on page 10)



Thursday, November 27, 1986

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9

Faces And Places by anne washburn mc williams

"Going places" in November

Left to right, standing: J. C. Mitchell, Oktibbeha; James Webster, Hinds-Madison; Roy Myers, George; Harry Phillips, Benton; Ken Stringer, Covington; Bill Smith, Lee; Marvin Cox, Union County; Lynn Mackey, Wayne; Jerald Welch, Humphreys; Roger Dorsett, Jackson; Lavon Hatten, Sharkey-Issaquena; Seated: J. W. Brister, Hinds-Madison; Norma Mackey, Wayne; Nolan Houston, Carroll; Elmer Howell, Walthall; Shirley Massey, Jackson.

Associations receive awards during banquet

By J. Ray Grissett, Associational Administration Consultant
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

The third annual Associational Awards Banquet was held during the Mississippi Baptist Convention at Calvary Church, Jackson, on Nov. 11.

The staff members and spouses from the associations, and the Baptist Building staff and spouses gathered to acknowledge the special efforts made through the associations by their respective churches. The information from each church letter within the association is used to determine the strength and growth or lack of same in the various programs of the associations.

As a result of the information provided by the associational clerks and directors of missions certain pre-determined areas of achievement, of which the associational leadership is aware, are recognized. The associational staff members and local associational program leaders are presented certificates denoting their accomplishments. The associations received plaques for public display as note of their accomplishments. The Award of Excellence goes to the single association that ranks highest in over all performance and strength as compared to all other associations.

The following associations were recipients of the awards given out during the banquet. They were presented by the various program directors, Chester Vaughn, program director, and Earl Kelly, executive secretary/treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. They were 147 present for the banquet.

Hinds-Madison — Largest numerical increase in Sunday School enrollment for 1985-86 — James Webster, Director of Church Services.

Benton — Highest percentage increase in Sunday School enrollment for 1985-86 — Harry Phillips, Director of Missions.

George — Largest percentage of churches with enrollment gain in Church Training 1985-86 — Horace Glass, Director of Missions.

Hinds-Madison — Largest number of Church Training Leadership Study course awards 1985-86 — James Webster, Director of Church Services.

Chickasaw — Highest ratio of baptisms per one hundred resident members 1985-86 — Foy Rogers, Director of Missions.

Hinds-Madison — Highest total number of baptisms 1985-86 J. W. Brister, Director of Missions.

Hinds-Madison — Largest numerical increase in resident church membership 1985-86 — J. W. Brister, Director of Missions.

Oktibbeha — Largest percentage increase in resident church membership 1985-86 — J. C. Mitchell, Director of Missions.

Union County — Largest numerical increase in music enrollment 1985-86 — Marvin Cox, Director of Missions.

Carroll — Largest percentage increase in music enrollment 1985-86 — Nolan Houston, Director of Missions.

Union County — Largest numerical increase in Brotherhood enrollment 1985-86 — Marvin Cox, Director of Missions.

Walhall — Largest percentage increase in Brotherhood enrollment 1985-86 — George Lee, Director of Missions.

Jackson — (for) conducting the largest number of mission ministries 1985-86 — Roger Dorsett, Director of Missions.

Wayne — (for) providing the most effective response to hunger — Lynn Mackey, Director of Missions.

Jeff Davis — Highest per capita giving to churches 1985-86 — Ken Stringer, Director of Missions.

Lebanon — Highest per capita Cooperative Program giving churches 1985-86 — Joel D. Ray, Director of Missions.

Sharkey-Issaquena — Highest percentage of churches receiving Distinguished Recognition (WMU) 1985-86 — Lavon Hatten, Director of Missions.

Humphreys — Highest percentage of churches having WMU in 1985-86 — Jerald Welch, Director of Missions.

Hinds-Madison — Highest number of church study course awards 1985-86 — James Webster, Director of Church Services.

Humphreys — Highest percentage of churches earning study course awards 1985-86 — Jerald Welch, Director of Missions.

Lee Association — AWARD OF EXCELLENCE William P. Smith, III, Director of Missions.

Editor A. L. Goodrich used to write a column he called "Going Places." He reported on churches he visited or people he saw around the state every week or so. Or he reported on the progress of churches he felt were "going places." If their number of subscriptions to the *Baptist Record* had increased, he definitely labeled the congregations as "going places."

During November I've visited more churches than usual. November 2, W. D. and I were at First Church, Bruce, (Charles Nestor, pastor), for Lucille Cannon Day. Because I'd written a series of columns on Mrs. Cannon, the WMU director, Mrs. Syble Brasher, invited me to participate in the series of tributes given in the morning service.

Then in the afternoon the church had a birthday party for Mrs. Cannon. (November 3 was her 80th birthday.) They gave her a money tree to help out on her trip to Mexico in February. She has kept after the women of her church and county until it looks like they're going to meet the goal of sending 100 quilts to a mission in Mexico. Now Mrs. Cannon is planning to go on a volunteer mission trip to Mexico herself. I'll write more about that later, when she gets back. The party took place only about an hour after a covered dish lunch at the church. I agreed with somebody I heard say, "Few people can cook like the women of Calhoun County!"

Warm sunshine that Sunday changed the leaves to shimmering splashes of gold and scarlet. In late afternoon we drove to Mantee, because we wanted to hear Kim Wickes, the blind Korean singer, in concert that evening at the Mantee Church. The last time I'd heard Kim sing was while we were on a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee. Terry and Norrie Williams, the pastor and his wife, graciously let us sit on their living room couch and rest a couple of hours. Their baby, Nathaniel, had grown a lot in the few weeks since I first met him and took his picture. Kim's concert was good, as I had expected it to be.

November 16, I got up early to go to 8:30 service at Morrison Heights so I could hear my new pastor, Ken Alford, preach. After Sunday School, W. D. and I went to Magee to a birthday dinner for his Aunt Kate McWilliams, a member of Corinth Church. She was 95 on November 22. W.D.'s brother, Speedy, who had surgery in Jackson this month, lives near Aunt Kate so we stopped to see him, too. Aunt Kate and W.D.'s mother were sisters and her late husband, William, was the brother of W. D.'s father. Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren filled her little house and spilled over onto the porch and yard.

November 19, I spoke in prayer meeting at Murphy Creek Church near Louisville. The WMU director, Mrs. Ruth Fulcher, had asked me to emphasize foreign missions. I'm glad to see that Nepal is one of the countries included in Royal Service for Week of Prayer programs. The people

in Nepal who can be and sometimes are, imprisoned for sharing their faith, need our prayers. And so do our Southern Baptist missionaries there, Wayne and Pat Thorpe, who cannot evangelize in Nepal, but who seek to show Christ's love through their lives as they work at the hospital and in health centers around Tansen. I talked at Murphy Creek about Nepal and about Thailand. Then I spent the night with Louise Hill Miller and her mother, Mrs. Luther Hill. (Louise was working with the Church Training department when I moved to Jackson in 1953. She's librarian now at Murphy Creek.)

Don't tell the women of Calhoun County, but Louise can cook as well as they! And so can some of those other women of Winston County. Thursday,

November 20, I stayed to speak to senior citizens (the Young at Heart) at their monthly luncheon. People came from several churches in Winston County, and so did Jerry Stevens, the director of missions, and his wife.

Murphy Creek is building a new sanctuary. The pastor, Arnold Davis, was among a group who went on a preaching mission to Korea earlier this year. He showed me a picture of members of the new mission church he organized there. (Terry Williams, the Mantee pastor, went with that same group.) For the Young at Heart luncheon, Davis' daughter-in-law, Delores (Mrs. Tim) Davis; presented special music.

After lunch, Mrs. Juanita Hight and I visited Mrs. Louise McGee. They are both members of First Church, Louisville. Mrs. Hight is the church librarian. Mrs. McGee is a former WMU director of that church and also of Poplar Flat, and she told me she

November 22, in the fellowship hall It was in Mrs. McGee's Sunday School had taught Sunday School for 56 years. Indy Whitten told me, that she first heard God's call to foreign missions. (Anybody who hasn't eaten a slice of Mrs. McGee's caramel pie hasn't really lived yet! The theme of this column is not food, though you might not believe it.)

November 22, in the fellowship hall of First Church, Jackson, Mildred Tolar and her sisters and brothers celebrated their mother, Flora Tolar's 90th birthday. Mildred has been working in the Baptist Building for 20 years, and she and I have been friends even longer than that. Mrs. Tolar and Mildred are both members of First, Jackson.

This month a lot of people in my family, and in my husband's, have been ill. I've tended to become discouraged and gloomy. But this week, as Thanksgiving Day comes again, I must ask myself, why am I complaining? Why am I not on my knees praising God for all his wonderful goodness and mercy? I have a loving husband, a mother who encourages me and prays for me, an understanding sister (and one I'm proud of, because I've recently learned she was named Teacher of the Year in her city's school system, the second time within five years). I have friends in many places, all over the world, who laugh and cry and pray with me. I thank God for all of these encouragers. As for jobs, I don't know of any place I'd rather work than right here.

Harry Lucenay printed a prayer in his column for the bulletin of Temple, Hattiesburg. I hope he doesn't mind

(Continued on page 11)

Devotional

Year-long praise

By Robert M. Hanvey

I often wonder why we wait until Thanksgiving to offer all of our thanks to our Heavenly Father for his blessings. I suppose it is in us to wait until someone, or something, prompts us to action. Perhaps this is one reason we give all of our thanks at one time. Another reason may be that we are too busy to give thanks at other times. Whatever the reason or the excuse for not giving God the glory all year, let us lay it aside and give thanks even after Thanksgiving Day.

This post-Thanksgiving season is an opportunity for us to reflect upon and be grateful for all of God's goodness toward us. We could resolve to offer praise and gratitude every day for life, health, family, friends, food, clothing, and shelter. These are the things God promised to take care of for those who trust him for their spiritual and physical well-being (Matthew 6:25-33).

During a service for our kindergarten children, I asked them to tell about the things for which they were thankful. Many of the items I listed were concerns of those children. Our adult nature tends to get out of line when we fail to have child-like gratitude toward our Heavenly Father. He is worthy to be praised every day, all year long.

Robert Hanvey is pastor, First, Hazlehurst.



Hanvey

Carey pitcher Benton shares gospel at games

HATTIESBURG, Miss. — William Carey College pitcher Steve Benton spent last summer, from June 4-Aug. 11, touring the country with the top Athletes in Action-USA baseball team. (Athletes in Action is a branch of Campus Crusade for Christ.) He and his teammates became "summer missionaries," sharing the gospel at games, with youth clinics, and with players on America's top collegiate all-star teams in Kansas, Alaska, Colorado, and overseas in Holland and West Germany.

Benton also had the opportunity to share his personal testimony with fans. On one occasion in Alaska, fans who had been drinking and harassing the AIA-USA team changed their actions after Benton's presentation. He was excited and encouraged to see these results from the Christian seed he planted.



Pictured for picnic lunch, left to right, are Brenda Edwards, Big Level; Leslie Hair, Jamie Benton, Jonathan Brown, Jimmy Howell, Brandon Payne, and Christy Duncan, all of Grace Memorial Church.

98 gather on Gulf Coast for Mission Friends meet

Ninety-eight Mission Friends and their leaders, representing 13 churches in the Gulf Coast Association, gathered Oct. 11 on the beachfront campus of William Carey College on the Coast for the third Mission Friends Morning.

Churches participating were First, Gulfport; Bay Vista; Bel Aire; First, Biloxi; New Hope; Big Ridge; Sharon; Bayou View; First, Lyman; Big Level; Grace Memorial; Pine View; and First, Wiggins.

The four-and-a-half-year-old children engaged in directed outdoor activities related to *A Surprise Among the Orange Trees*, a study of migrant mis-

sions in Florida. Among other activities they saw the various colors of fruits and vegetables as matching streamers were moved to the rhythm of music and scrubbed vegetables which perhaps had been picked by migrant workers.

Activity leaders included Vicki Ausgaard and Debbie Randall, First, Gulfport; Ruth Brock, Bay Vista;

Brenda Edwards, Big Level; Connie Martin, Pine View; and Lisa Sartin, First, Wiggins. Betty Holmes, First, Gulfport, assisted with registration and scheduling; and Kelly Gray, First, Gulfport, present in clown costume. Sue Perry serves as associational Mission Friends director.

Jon Doler will lead study on "The Doctrine of the Laity"

Jon Doler, pastor of First Church, Raleigh, will be the leader for a study of "The Doctrine of the Laity," at a Key Leader Seminar at Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko, Dec. 6.

The doctrinal study for 1986 is a required book for a acquiring a Brotherhood Leadership Diploma.



Doler

Pre-registration is required. A \$10 fee provides a study guide, materials, and lunch. Include the fee, writing the Brotherhood Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205.

The program begins at 9 a.m. and concludes at 2 p.m. that afternoon.

Four reasons for not drinking booze: the head is clearer, the health is better, the heart is lighter, and the purse is heavier.

Young ministers' wives will meet at Garaywa



Mrs. Rodrick Conerly, missionary to Lima, Peru, will be the missionary speaker for the overnight retreat. Caroline and her family are living in Jackson during their furlough.

Young women, 40 years of age and under, who are wives of pastors, ministers of music, education, youth, activities, or ministerial students, are invited to attend this mid-winter retreat.

Activities begin with supper at 6 p.m. on Friday evening and conclude with Saturday lunch.

The retreat is complimentary from Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, but reservations are necessary. To make reservations, contact the WMU Department, Box 530, Jackson, Miss. 39205, or call 968-3800.

Baptists hear president's plan for porn fight

By David Wilkinson

WASHINGTON (BP) — President Ronald Reagan pledged his administration will give "new priority" to the problem of pornography, reported Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian Rogers, one of 21 religious leaders who met with Reagan Nov. 14.

"The president made a strong commitment to do something about this problem, and we assured him of our own commitment and cooperation," said Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn.

Rogers and SBC Home Mission Board language missions director Oscar Romo were part of a delegation from the Religious Alliance Against Pornography that met with Reagan and Attorney General Edwin Meese to press for a beefed-up federal crackdown on illegal pornographic materials.

Rogers said the president agreed to speak out personally on the issue and to push for a coordinated effort between the Justice, Treasury, and Postal departments to combat obscenity.

He noted "not much has happened" since he participated in a similar meeting with Reagan on the same issue three years ago. "But I'm going to try to be optimistic," he said. "If these things (proposed by Meese) are implemented, it can't help but make a tremendous impact on the proliferation of obscene materials."

Meese outlined plans for a "new offensive against illegal obscenity" during a half-day briefing preceding the Nov. 13-14 alliance strategy conference at the nation's capital. The plans incorporate many of the proposals set forth in the report of the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography.

The briefing also included spokesmen from the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography, the office of the U.S. surgeon general, the FBI, U.S. Customs Service, and U.S. Postal Service.

The religious alliance, formed in July, has brought together a broad cross-section of religious leaders in a common battle against hardcore and child pornography. Other Southern Baptist members of the coalition are Harold C. Bennett, president of the SBC Executive Committee, and Jack Stanton, first vice president of the convention.

More than 20 Southern Baptists participated in the meeting, and Rogers and three other Southern Baptists were included on the program.

In an interview following the conference, Rogers commended the leadership of the denomination's Christian Life Commission but lamented that "Southern Baptists as a whole have not been out front on this issue like we should be and could be." Many concerned pastors and laypersons have become "disheartened," he said, frustrated largely by the reluctance of the federal government to lead a crackdown on obscenity.

At the White House briefing, Meese assured the religious leaders that the government's passive role in dealing with hardcore pornography will soon change.

David Wilkinson writes for the Christian Life Commission.

"I will trust God"

(Continued from page 8)

I am so glad to know that she had children of God to pray over her and lay hands on her before she went in. I will trust God and his mighty Word rather than some man made tradition.

Even the altar call and laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit is biblical. In Acts 19:1-6 we read of Paul at Ephesus who after finding disciples who had not received the Holy Spirit laid his hands on them and they received.

I have not written this letter to get into a theological debate with anyone,

State native leads crusades in S. Africa

Tom Cox, evangelist from Mountainburg, Ark. recently returned from South Africa, where he and a group of 17 people conducted ten crusades in the Johannesburg area. Cox's team represented Baptist churches in eight states.

One member of the group extended his mission for an extra week of crusades in Zimbabwe. Cox, his wife, Kay, and daughter, Gaye, stayed an additional three weeks conducting crusades in Cape Town, Durban, and Richards Bay. The Cox family sang and preached at all three seminaries of the Baptist Union.

As a result of the crusades in South Africa, there were 502 professions of faith and 905 rededications. Cox has conducted numerous revivals in the churches of Mississippi. He was born in Picayune, and attended Clarke Memorial College.

Seminary, Covington, to celebrate 100th

Seminary Church, Covington Association, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Dec. 7. Morning services will feature special music presentations including the singing of "Arise O King of Grace," the hymn sung at the first meeting of the church on December 3, 1886.

The sermon will be given by Jerry Windsor, a former pastor of the church. Windsor conducted extensive research on the history of Seminary Church and of the town while pastor there. He is author of a book which records the results of his historical studies. Talmadge Smith of the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission will present a certificate in honor of the church's centennial. Following the morning service there will be a covered-dish dinner in the church's East Room. At 1:30 more special music will be presented, along with short talks by other former pastors. All who attend the service and other friends of the church will receive a booklet containing old photographs of the church and church members as well as a brief history of the church.

Tim Turnham is pastor.

Try living within your income and you'll live without worries — and also without a lot of other things.

Many people believe in luck. How else can you explain the success of those you don't like?

but I write it in love and in hopes that Baptists will never fall into the trap of the devil we will call traditionalism and die. That is what happened and caused Martin Luther to write his theses and put them on the door of Whittenburg. I thank God that someone did take a stand and voice what I will call the will of God. We do not need a man-made, dried-up, dead religion. We need to show the people Jesus and the power that raised him from the dead.

—Kenneth Patterson
Parchman

Senior Adult Corner



"Meet and Eat" sung at Ridgecrest

A group from First Church, Pascagoula, performed the musical "Meet and Eat," during Senior Citizens' Week at Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center in October. The 47-member troupe were accompanied by church staffers Dennis Ray Smith and Gary Anglin. They made side trips to the Biltmore House and Stone Mountain. The group is called the Son-Shiners.

Senior adult ministry termed "coming of age"

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Older adults soon may be able to kick off their climbing boots, stake a flag, and claim what's rightfully theirs. The trek to the top of the mountain is almost over.

It's been a long climb. For years, senior adults practically have been ignored by churches that have not realized they are a special type of people, a leader in the field insists.

But the number of senior adults has increased significantly, and with the increase has come a realization by Southern Baptist churches that senior adults deserve their own special type of ministry, says Horace Kerr, supervisor of the senior adult section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

"There are so many of us now," says Kerr, 62, "that more Southern Baptist churches are doing something about it. For so long, senior adults were ignored until we started increasing in numbers, and now churches are showing a greater awareness of the potential of senior adults."

Kerr suggests senior adults — those who are 60 and over — statistically have come into their own or "come of age."

"Coming of Age: Senior Adults and the Churches" is the 1986-87 special emphasis of the family ministry department and will be the featured theme of a Southern Baptist Senior Adult Convention to be held April 27-29, 1987, Kerr reports.

Today, 27.5 million Americans, or 12 percent of the population, are age 65

or older, Kerr says. Sixteen percent, or 37.5 million Americans, are age 60 and older.

"More persons are living to an older age. The fastest-growing segment of our population is the 85-plus age group," he says. "And more people are living to the old-old age of 100. We are rapidly approaching the time when 50 percent of the population will be more than 52 years of age. The median is now age 30 plus.

"Programs for senior adults seem to be changing in nature," Kerr says.

"Most churches began with an activities program for seniors, but they are now beginning to add programs that offer learning and service activities."

Seminars and workshops which focus on physical fitness, money management, self-esteem, continued learning and spiritual growth are all now being offered to senior adults by churches. Other seminars the family ministry department suggests that churches conduct include achieving wholeness in later life and enriching marriages in senior years.

"There is a real need for many senior adults to achieve a feeling of self-worth after they have been separated from their work, careers and children," Kerr says. "They need to get to the point where they want to work outside the home. If they are not involved, they won't get the feeling of self-worth."

Terri Lackey writes for the Sunday School Board.

Christians outnumber Muslims in Nigeria

JOS, Nigeria (EP) — Christians now outnumber Muslims in Nigeria, according to a report compiled by church leaders in the nation's 10 northern states. The report was issued in response to government action making the nation a member of

Muslims in Nigeria

the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) without public discussion or debate.

Using statistical projections, the report estimated the current situation as Christians 51 percent, Muslims 45 percent.



Intensive care

*Drugs are just as deadly
as a loaded gun.
Don't take chances
with your life*

Is dependency a disease?

As a psychologist, how do you consider chemical dependency? Do you consider it a disease?

In psychology and psychiatry we refer to most biobehavioral and psychological problems as "disorders." We do not usually use the term "disease" for mental disorders, but reserve that for such diseases as tuberculosis. Thus we speak of, say, schizophrenia as a major thought DISORDER or biological depression as a major affective DISORDER. Now schizophrenia, for example, is a very severe and debilitating condition. Most psychologists and psychiatrists would agree that schizophrenia is usually a more severe and difficult clinical problem than chemical dependency. So the use of the term disorder does not have any relevance to how complicated, or severe, or clinically difficult a problem is. We, therefore, also use the term disorder to refer to chemical dependencies. We call these "substance abuse disorders." And, I might add, contrary to what some appear to believe, both the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association have for many years considered alcoholism and other chemical dependencies to be true clinical disorders. This may be something relatively new to the average person, but it is not a new idea in psychology and psychiatry. I do adhere to the "disease model" of chemical dependency; many of my colleagues who are drug and alcohol counselors tend to use the term "disease." For

Librarians pay tribute to Wayne Todd

The Mississippi Church Media Library Organization, meeting at Cleveland, Oct. 25, adopted a resolution of tribute to the late Wayne Todd, secretary of the Church Library Department of the Baptist Sunday School Board of the SBC for more than 19 years.

The resolution stated that Mr. Todd had "a special, personal, and effective influence on the growth and development of church library ministry in his beloved home state of Mississippi," and that he had "served several Mississippi churches as pastor in an effective manner."

The document continued, "Mr. Todd challenged every Christian he knew to an active personal witnessing life." He was "an example to all through his life of personal witnessing." He "set an example to all in his life of giving."

Thus the Church Media Library Organization chose to recognize his contributions to Christian education and to go on record commending this servant of God.

Faces and Places

(Continued from page 9)
if I reprint it here. It says something to me.

Lord, thank you for this sink of dirty dishes; we have good food to eat. Thank you for this big pile of dirty clothes; we have them to wear. Thank you for these unmade beds; they were all comfortable last night.

Thank you for this finger-smudged refrigerator that needs defrosting so badly; it has served us faithfully for a long time. Our family is grateful for that tall grass that needs mowing; we all enjoy our private yard. Thank you for that slamming door; the children are healthy and able to run and play.

Lord, the presence of all these chores awaiting me says that you have richly blessed this family. I shall do them all gratefully.

NEW SCHEDULE FOR



CDT	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00	Changed Lives	Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-lendas	Infinity Factory	Moody Science
6:30	One in the Spirit	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
7:00	Catch the Spirit						Sun School Lesson
7:30	This Is The Life	Sunshine Factory	Davey and Goliath				
8:00	Christopher Closeup	Joy of Music	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Sunshine Factory
8:30	Westbrook Hospital	Country Crossroads	Great Churches	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Gigglestone Hotel
9:00	In Touch	c Que Pasa?	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	Skippy/bush Kangaroo
9:30							Lone Ranger Cartoon
10:00	Joy of Music	Life Today	Cisco Kid				
10:30	Gloria						Our World
11:00	Profiles	Sunshine Factory	In Concert				
11:30	At Home With the Bible	"Sgt. Preston of the Yukon"					
Noon	The Baptist Hour	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Country Crossroads
12:30		Vegetable Soup	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-lendas	Infinity Factory	
1:00	Prime Timers	Sunshine Factory	Jimmy Houston				
1:30	Sunday Selection	Psychiatry and You	Super Handyman				
2:00		COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Plant Groom
2:30							David Wade
3:00	Great Churches	Encore Theatre	Davey and Goliath				
3:30							Sunshine Factory
4:00	Joy of Music						Gigglestone Hotel
4:30	Gloria	"Sgt. Preston of the Yukon"	Country Crossroads				
5:00	Profiles	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	
5:30	At Home with the Bible	Villa Alegre	Sunshine Factory	Carrasco-lendas	Infinity Factory	Vegetable Soup	Jimmy Houston
6:00	This Is The Life	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	c Que Pasa?	Skippy/bush Kangaroo
6:30	Christopher Closeup	Life Today	Lone Ranger Cartoon				
7:00	Westbrook Hospital						Cisco Kid
7:30	Changed Lives	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Joy of Music	Our World
8:00	One in the Spirit	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads		In Concert
8:30	Catch the Spirit						Moody Science
9:00		COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
9:30	Sunday Selection						Sun School Lesson
10:00							This Is The Life
10:30	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Christopher Closeup				
11:00							Westbrook Hospital
11:30	Prime Timers	Bill Cosby	Shari Lewis Show	Mickey Rooney	Rebop	c Que Pasa?	Our World
Midnight	Changed Lives	Life Today	In Concert				
12:30	One in the Spirit	Gloria	Word of Life	Music Is	First Things First	Joy of Music	Super Handyman
1:00	Catch the Spirit	In Concert	Great Churches	Invitation to Life	Country Crossroads		Plant Groom
1:30	This Is The Life						Moody Science
2:00	Christopher Closeup	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	COPE	Family Foundations
2:30	Westbrook Hospital						Sun School Lessons
3:00	The Baptist Hour	Encore Theatre	Skippy/bush Kangaroo				
3:30							Lone Ranger Cartoon
4:00	Prime Timers	Encore Theatre	Cisco Kid				
4:30	Super Handyman	"Sgt. Preston of the Yukon"					
5:00	Plant Groom	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	Lassie	
5:30	David Wade						

*Effective Week of November 23

+Effective Week of December 7

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P O Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205



James Fondren (pictured at right) and his wife, **Willie**, were honored on his retirement at Taylor Church, Taylor, where he served for 12 years as pastor. He has been pastoring for over 30 years in north Mississippi. The church presented to him a love offering that exceeded \$1,800.00. Don Stanfill, director of missions of Lafayette Association presented a certificate of appreciation, and a book of letters.

Fondren has been ill with cancer, and is back in the hospital in Oxford.



Puckett Church, Puckett, recently held ordination of deacons. Pictured, left to right, are Scottie Purvis, ordained; Charles McGlocklin, manager, Baptist Book Store, Jackson, and an ordained deacon who previously served in other churches; Alvin C. Doyle, pastor; and Glenn Greer, ordained.



Jackie N. Yow, pastor of Flag Lake Church, Northwest, has been selected to appear in "Outstanding Young Men of America," and the "Dictionary of International Biography" twentieth edition. He is presently pursuing a Th.D. at Mid-America Seminary. Yow is married to the former Nineveh Gail Wakefield of Caledonia, and they have two sons, Jason, and Jeremy.

Tim Glaze is a seminary intern serving as associate Baptist Student Union director at the Perkinson campus of Mississippi Gulf Coast Junior College for the 1986-87 school year.

He has earned a master of divinity degree from New Orleans Seminary and is completing requirements for a master of religious education degree there.

Mississippi Top 10 Associations in church study course awards

1985-1986

All Subject Areas	Number	Association	Awards	
1	Hinds Madison	5,407	5	Gulf Coast 1,231
2	Lee	2,177	6	Jackson 1,015
3	Rankin	1,707	7	Adams 966
4	Northwest	1,513	8	Jones 958
			9	Pike 921
			10	Copiah 910

Lyon Church, Lyon, held deacon ordination on Oct. 5. Pictured, left to right, are Randol C. Lindsay, pastor, and Eddie Simmons.



Mississippi Convention adopts three resolutions

The Resolutions Committee presented three resolutions during their report to the Mississippi Baptist Convention on Wednesday morning, Nov. 12. All three were adopted.

Those on the committee include Roy McHenry, chairman, Okolona; Mrs. Joan Tyler, Collins; Mrs. Jean Bond, Starkville; John Armistead, Tupelo; James Street, Cleveland; W. W. Walley, Waynesboro; and Red Rufin, Laurel.

to abortion, parimutuel gambling and lottery, pornography, alcohol, drugs, and child abuse;

WHEREAS, these problems continue to challenge the Christian value of our society and demand the positive witness and ministry of Mississippi Baptists;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we the Mississippi Baptist Convention recommit ourselves to a witness in the marketplace of life which combats the negative influence of the world with the positive influence of Christ;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we reaffirm the resolutions passed by the 1985 Mississippi Baptist Convention addressing critical moral, and ethical issues, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that Mississippi Baptists make every effort to be an influence in the marketplace by reestablishing Christian values in Mississippi society under the leadership of those whose lives demonstrate the positive ministry of Jesus Christ in word, deed, and attitude.

#1 Resolution To Memorialize Owen Cooper

WHEREAS the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting in Jackson on November 12, 1985, gave special recognition to Owen Cooper, of Yazoo City, naming him "The Mississippi Baptist Layman of the Century," and recounting his many contributions as a religious lay leader, a humanitarian, a national, state, and community statesman, and industrialist;

WHEREAS in addition to the many official positions he held among Southern Baptists and Baptists of the world, he served two terms, 1955-1956, as president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention;

WHEREAS God in his providence called our brother Owen Cooper to his rest and reward on November 8, 1986; and

WHEREAS we join the thousands over the world who mourn his passing and will miss his capable guidance and inspiring dedication;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting in annual session on November 12, 1986, convey to the family of Owen Cooper our deepest Christian love; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we further express our profound gratitude for his exemplary life service to our Lord by dedicating the Mississippi Baptist Convention Annual of 1986 to the memory of Dr. Owen Cooper with an appropriate dedicatory page and picture in recognition of this action.

#2 Resolution On A Positive Witness

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Baptist Convention meeting on November 11-13, 1985, spoke strongly in opposition

Annuity Board, Equitable reach building agreement

DALLAS (BP) — The Southern Baptist Annuity Board has reached an agreement with Equitable Real Estate, a subsidiary of the Equitable Life Assurance Society, to lease a new office building constructed to the Baptist agency's specifications in Dallas.

The board will move to the office just north of the city's central business district in late 1988. Annuity Board president Darold H. Morgan

announced.

Morgan said the contract includes a long-term lease with an option to buy.

Construction plans are in early stages and site work will begin in the spring.

The board made a substantial profit on the sale of its office at 511 North Akard in Dallas which it has occupied for 27 years, Morgan said.

Revival Dates

Puckett Church, Puckett: youth revival; Dec. 7-10; Sunday, worship service, 11 a.m., parents meet with evangelist, 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Jerry Pipes, youth evangelist; Harry Layden, music evangelist; Alvin C. Doyle, pastor.

Cooperative Program enjoys best 1st month

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptists' national Cooperative Program got off to its best start ever, with October receipts totalling \$10,937,115, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the convention's Executive Committee.

The Cooperative Program is the Southern Baptist Convention method of funding missions, evangelism and education endeavors worldwide. The 1986-87 Cooperative Program began its fiscal year Oct. 1; the national goal for the year is \$136 million.

October Cooperative Program receipts were a record for that month and 21 percent higher than the \$9,039,034 posted in October of 1985, though Bennett said gifts would likely be higher now than for the rest of the year.

He said reasons for the large increase are difficult to determine. It might have been due to churches whose annual budgets close out Sept. 30 sending along their Cooperative Program checks at the end of the fiscal year, which would have been tabulated nationally in October. Or it partially may have been due to churches which surpassed their regular annual budgets channeling significant portions of their "challenge budgets" along to the Cooperative Program.



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Committee on Nominations nominees are elected

The report of the Nominating Committee was brought to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Tuesday morning, Nov. 11, by Odean Puckett, Natchez, chairman. Other committee members: Charles Stubblefield, Ecru; Tommy Arinder, Cleveland; Leon Young, Meridian; Clark McMurray, Pascagoula; Frank Gunn, ex officio. The report was adopted and the nominees elected.

Persons elected to begin new terms on Mississippi Baptist boards and commissions are listed below. The asterisks denote at large members.

CONVENTION BOARD MEMBERS

Term Expires 1987

Association	Town
Franklin, John Ira Hill	Meadville
Leake, Carlton Jones	Carthage
Pontotoc, Randy Kobl	Pontotoc
Union County, Carl White	New Albany
Warren, David Grimsley	Vicksburg
Term Expires 1988	
Holmes, James Carr	Tchula
Lamar, George Aultman	Hattiesburg
Lincoln, Edgar Lee Wright	Brookhaven
North Delta (Quitman), Mike Smithy	Marks
Panola, A. Harrison Weger	Batesville
Winston, Jerry Hill	Louisville
Term Expires 1989	
Adams, Odean Puckett	Natchez
Alcorn, Troy Wilson, Jr.	Corinth
Benton, Robert Calvert	Ashland
Gulf Coast, G. H. English*	Ocean Springs
Hinds-Madison, Gary Richardson*	Jackson
Itawamba, Martin Hayden	Fulton
Jackson, Roy Phillips*	Ocean Springs
Jeff Davis, Ingram Foster*	Prentiss
Lafayette, Mrs. Gerald (Patricia) Hasselman*	Oxford
Lebanon, Glenn Galey*	Hattiesburg
Lowndes, Mrs. Tom (Cindy) Peiphrey*	Columbus
Marion, Keith Gordon	Columbia
Marshall, Lee Castle	Holly Springs
Newton, A. Gus Merritt	Decatur
North Delta (Coahoma), Randol Lindsay Clarksdale	
Oktibbeha, John McMullen	Sturgis
Prentiss, Bill Duncan	Booneville
Rankin, Lannie Wilbourn*	Brandon
Rankin, Barry C. Corbett	Pelahatchie

Sharkey-Issaquena (Issaquena), John Pepper	Rolling Fork
Sharkey-Issaquena (Sharkey), H. A. Cain	Rolling Fork
Simpson, Charles Case	Mendenhall
Sunflower, Cornell Daughtry	Indianola
Tallahatchie, Don O'Quin	Charleston
Tippah, Billy W. Baker	Ripley
Tishomingo, Ralph Culp	Golden
Union (Jefferson), Charles Tyler	Vicksburg
Walton, Don Dobson	Tylertown
Washington, W. J. Ireland*	Greenville
Wayne, W. W. Walley*	Waynesboro
Wayne, T. R. Culpepper	State Line
Webster, James Justice	Eupora
Yalobusha, Leland Hurt, Jr.	Water Valley
Yazoo, Bryan Abel	Yazoo City

BOARD OF MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

Term Expires 1988

Mrs. William M. (Joyce) Beasley	Tupelo
Johnny Walker	Lucedale

CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION

Term Expires 1989

Dr. Jeanette Phillips	Oxford
Mrs. Robert (Stuart) Calvert	Ashland
Charles Myers	Jackson
Robert E. Maddux	Coldwater
William Jenkins	Cleveland

EDUCATION COMMISSION

Term Expires 1989

Ron Kirkland	Batesville
William Stewart	Eupora
Eddie Smith	Decatur
Robert Upchurch	Tupelo

HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Term Expires 1989

Talmadge Smith	Brookhaven
Mrs. William (Carroll) Waller	Jackson
John Flowers	Senatobia

BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE

Term Expires 1989

Dorothy Walker	Stoneville
Charles L. Miller	Jackson
Ronny E. Robinson	Bogue Chitto
Jim Futral	Jackson
W. Kelly Pyron	Natchez

BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Term Expires 1989

Bill Baker	Clinton
Norris Stampley	Jackson
James Wheatley	Madison

BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER

Term Expires 1989

Zach Hederman	Jackson
Mrs. Charles (Joan) Tyler	Collins
Allen O. Webb	Pascagoula
Ralph Rives	Jackson
Richard Miller	Jackson

BAPTIST MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Term Expires 1989

James Richardson	Madison
Herbert T. Conley	Corinth
Cameron Dean	Tribbett

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Term Expires 1989

Mrs. Judy S. Blackledge	Laurel
Mrs. Edward C. (Kathleen) Bourland	Amory
Mrs. William L. (Martha Lynn) Brigham	Yazoo City
Bobby P. Martin	Ripley
Edward L. Cooper	Oxford

MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Term Expires 1989

Victor Walsh	McComb
Aven Whittington	Greenwood
Gordon Sansing	Vicksburg
Jim Yates	Yazoo City
W. D. Lofton	Brookhaven

WILLIAM CAREY COLLEGE

Term Expires 1989

Andy Carpenter	Ocean Springs
David Lee	Moss Point
Tommy King	Columbia
Dr. Elise Curtis	Collins
Bill Ray	Hattiesburg

MISSISSIPPI BIRACIAL BAPTIST COMMISSION

Term Expires 1987

Paul Stevens	Jackson
James Ruffin	Meridian
Term Expires 1988	
A. Gus Merritt	Decatur
Robert Calvert	Ashland
Jerry Mixon	Winona

Thursday, November 27, 1986

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 13

Staff Changes

Gene P. Smith has accepted the call

to pastor First Church of New Port Richey, Fla., effective Dec. 7. He has pastored Roseland Park Church in Picayune for five years.

Wayne Grothman became the

President Rogers seeks “very best Baptists”

(Continued on page 5)

a letter to the three men “thank you for their suggestion” and saying it was one of many he has received from “ad-hoc groups across the convention.”

“There have been a number of recommendations and suggestions made about the appointments,” Rogers said. “What I plan to do is to work with the convention-elected Peace Committee, but ultimately in the appointments I will follow the dictates of my own heart.”

Rogers, who is a member of the SBC Peace Committee that is charged with finding the sources of the controversy in the convention and making recommendations about ways to solve them, has said on several occasions he plans to appoint the “very best” Southern Baptists to the committees.

During a September meeting with editors of Baptist state newspapers, Rogers said: “I do not intend to make appointments that are overtly political. I’m going to try to make appointments from those that I consider to be the best Southern Baptists.”

At that meeting he said the “Baptist Faith and Message” statement, especially its section on the Scriptures, will be central for his appointments. He said: “If he doesn’t believe that, I wouldn’t appoint him.”

I would make appointments from people who hold that kind of theological perspective, and so obviously, that would exclude some people, but it would not exclude people on a political basis. It would exclude them on a theological basis, and theology is only one issue. I want to appoint people who would be the best Baptists, not only theologically, but cooperatively and intellectually and spiritually.”

He added he would not appoint persons to the Committee on Committees who, although believing as he does, would appoint to the Committee on Boards people who believe differently. “I don’t see that as political,” he said. “I see that as consistent.”

In his Open Letter, Rogers asked persons who wish to nominate persons for appointment to the committees to provide him with specific information.

Name, address, home and business telephone numbers, church name and address, and whether the person nominated is a pastor or a layman should be included.

minister of music and activities at Meadville Church, Sept. 28. Grothman has served churches in the Delta and left Whitesand Church of Prentiss to go to Meadville. A native of Greenville, he received a master of music education degree from Delta State University.

Ron Kegley, former music-youth director at Wynndale Church,

Just for the Record



Beulah Church, Newton County, recently held dedication services for its new pastorum. The pastorum is brick, four bedrooms, and has 2,368 square feet floor space.

Salem was organized July 10, 1850, and is the mother church of five other churches. It was admitted into the Mt. Pisgah Association, Aug. 1, 1851, and admitted into the Newton County Association, October, 1931. Salem has licensed 15 ministers.

Pictured (left to right) are Ricky Harrison, chairman; Edward Knox, pastor; Charles Melton, director of missions, Newton County; Mrs. Mary Faye Reeves; Mrs. Nancy Chaney; William Huey, and Jack Bynum.



Carriage Hills Church, Southaven, celebrated its 20th anniversary on Nov. 2. A high attendance goal was set at 400, with 440 present in Sunday School. Pictured, left to right, are Gene Thach, chairman of the anniversary committee; J. B. Miller, first pastor at Carriage Hills; David Merritt, second pastor at Carriage Hills; Charles Bagwell, third and present pastor; and Alan Davis, Sunday School director.



GAs of First Church, McComb, recently held their recognition service. Girls who completed their Mission Adventure books are pictured: First Grade, Michaelanne Farnham, Dixie Ivey, Meg Jackson, Catherine Jones, Deidre Sadler, Leah Clair Starrett, Gabby Bors and Summer Baron. Second Grade, Sarah Funchess, Jolie Hedglin, Alyson Cutrer, Robin Freshwater, Stacey Valentine, Jennifer Johnston, Traci Dribben, Candace Brister and Natalie Werner. Third Grade, Callie Carruth, Anna Griffin, Genny Warren, Nicole Sadler, Lea Ellen Brock, Jessica Barron. Fourth Grade, Krissi Allen, Karye Chan-

nell, Joy-Ellyn Morgan, Michelle Prentiss, Jennifer Williamson, Melanie Hennington; and Heather Johnston. Fifth Grade, Teresa Skipper, Amy Cutrer, Tara Adair, Susan Valentine and Stephanie Shows. Sixth Grade, Lee Jones and Angie Dobson.

GA leaders are Mary Freshwater, Virginia Griffin, Barbara Starrett, Lou Warren, Sue Valentine, Jan Jackson, Brenda Mar-sales, Jo Nell Johnston, Sue Hamilton, Kim Luzader, Frances Lindsey, and Mary Jo Dribben. GA director is Fern Hedglin. Gary Berry is pastor.



GAs of Mt. Zion Church, Independence, dressed up in saris following their study of Bangladesh. The study was led by Mrs. Maxine Smith and Mrs. Patt Bien, furloughing missionary to Bangladesh.

Pictured, top picture, left to right, back row, are Emily Bien, Amanda Williams, April Farrow, Brandy Birdsong. Front row, Kelly Morgan, Nikki Scruggs, Nathan Bien, and Mindy Gitter.

Bottom picture, left to right, are Amanda Williams, Melanie Freeman, Beverly Ricks, Lisa Pounders, and Amy Birdsong.



Temple Church, Big Point, Pascagoula, held its GAs recognition service, Sept. 24. The theme of the service was "Send the Light." GAs recognized in the service are pictured, front row, Nisha Freeman, Jennifer Ruemenapp, Tracy Butler, Kim Dowdy, Leah Riley, Michelle Freeman, Jennifer Waltman and April Rumenapp. Back row, Angie Jones, Becky Freeman, Charity Mason, Julie Riley, and Ashley Rich.

Teachers are Dee Ann Riley and Marie Rich.



Youth of Bay Springs Church, Bay Springs participated in a youth Sunday emphasis, Nov. 9. They taught in all Sunday School classes, led in both morning and evening worship services, were interviewed by Clyde Little, pastor, during the Church Training hour and even sponsored a spaghetti lunch. Frank Nix is minister of music and youth, Betty Carol Robinson is youth committee chairman.

MC will present 'The Christmas Gift'

The Mississippi College Department of Music will present a second performance of **'The Christmas Gift'** by James Slater on Dec. 4, at 8 p.m. in Aven Auditorium in Clinton.

Slater, professor of music at Mississippi College, will conduct the performance. The production uses

Parkway Church, Natchez, over-subscribed its 1987 budget of \$471,394 for the 11th consecutive year. Joe Hartley, director of the Church's Forward Program of Church Finance for this year, made the announcement to the congregation Sunday evening, Nov. 9, Victory Day.

A total of \$473,512 has been pledged with 474 commitment cards returned.

Highlights included a fellowship dinner with Barry Landrum entertaining. Those ages 4-8 were entertained at a children's party. Over 700 attended these two events.

Serving as committee chairpersons for the 1986-87 Forward Program were Bill Campbell, Ray Boyd, Mrs. Jan Rabb, Tommy Dunn, Mr. and Mrs. Danny Burr, Mr. and Mrs. Sonny Stephens, Mrs. Yvonne Loflin, Mrs. Irene Loflin, Mrs. Tommie Lou Harlan, and Mrs. Pam Dossett.

Liberty Church of Flowood, Rankin County, will have Howard Aultman, evangelist, as speaker on Nov. 30. The services will be 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Mississippi college faculty members and students. For more information call 925-3230.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARIES

Ezra reads from Word; people rejoice in the law

By Robert E. Self

Nehemiah 8:1-3; Psalm 119:105-112

The plight of two friends on a hunting trip out west a couple of years ago taught us a great deal about survival. Hunting on a mountain as long as daylight allowed, they then started down only to be overtaken by darkness. The only flashlight they carried was much too weak and getting down was a very scary thing. Fortunately, they were able to get down without injury, though a couple of hours late and somewhat shaken.

Self
The story of our text today also speaks much about survival. The people had returned to the land after the years of captivity and had begun a semblance of national life. The temple and the walls of the city had been rebuilt. Worship was beginning again and hope was springing forth. For many years they had not been able to carry on their worship as in their history. As they set themselves to the task, they needed help and encouragement from God.

I. A request (Nehemiah 8:1)

Recognizing the role that the word of God had played in their past, the people asked Ezra to

Controversy creeps up about Jesus as the Messiah

By Marjean Patterson

John 7:1-52

The time came in Jerusalem for the observance of the Feast of Tabernacles. This seven day feast was annually celebrated in the fall of the year to commemorate the wilderness wanderings of the Jewish people. With the appearance of a large extended Thanksgiving celebration, it was a favorite festival of the people.

Patterson
The unbelieving half-brothers of Jesus urged him to go with them from Galilee to Jerusalem for this festival to publicly announce his mission. Jesus refused, for this was not the proper time for him to be revealed as God's anointed through his death and resurrection.

However, after the brothers, other family members, and friends left, Jesus did go to the feast. The conversation of Jesus with his half-brothers had referred to the time and manner of going, not that he would not go at all.

Luke's gospel reports that Jesus and his disciples went through Samaria to Jerusalem

The rainbow's sign: God's promises for the future

By James W. Street

Genesis 9:1-29

The beautiful bow in the sky deserves your response. I am not certain of the meaning of the rainbow before the episode in Genesis, but there is no doubt in my mind of the symbolic value of the bow in the cloud to Noah and all of us, his descendants. After the flood, the survivors standing on dry land built an altar and offered their thanks. In response God promised, covenanted, with Noah and made the rainbow the tangible, visible sign of

Street
it. Once more the God of the book of Genesis is revealed as the God in whom we may trust. Further, the bow tells us to take heart for this world can be trusted because of the creator who stands behind it.

The rainbow is also suggestive of God's mercy. Late one afternoon when a beautiful bow appeared, I exclaimed to one of our children:

UNIFORM

bring the law of Moses before them. This vital link with God and their past was seen as very important for the present and the future. One can only assume that they knew that God's word would provide direction for life.

It is interesting that they asked Ezra to read. A study of the law, he was a descendant of Aaron, the first high priest. When Ezra returned to Judah from Babylon, he was troubled by the moral climate and the lack of attention to the Word of God. He began to preach and to really force the issue of God's expectations in regard to the manner in which they lived.

II. The reading (Nehemiah 8:2-3)

The eagerness and need for all the people to hear the Word of God is hinted at in the fact that men and women came together for the reading. Prior to the captivity, women would not likely have joined in the services. Now, a nation is climbing out of the trash heap and all the people needed to hear from God.

Ezra began to read and the people stood in reverence. Their worship was intense. They raised their hands, a gesture of surrender in Judaism, and bowed their heads low, an act of

worship. As they worshipped and were bathed in the truth of the readings they began to weep. That which had been missing for so long was now becoming so real again. God was speaking to his people and they were being blessed by it. For hours they stood and listened as a great revival broke out right in their presence. Their involvement and joy were so great that the leaders had to calm them.

III. The results (Psalm 119:105-112)

The impression of God's Word was so strong that it became once again their standard for living. The psalmist expressed the wonderful power of that Word in the 119th. He declares that it is a light for the people. We must remember how precious light was in the ancient world. Groping in the darkness that life sometimes brings, God's Word is light.

He also tells us that the Word deserves our commitment (v. 106). It is a comfort when one is afflicted (v. 107), a guide to worship (vv. 111-112). The statement of the psalmist grows out of his conviction that the revealed truth of God is adequate for every need and must become the rule of life.

We must take care in our time to fashion our lives on the same foundation, God's revealed truth. Christians must make the study of God's

Word a great priority for life. We must study it privately as well as in our homes. And we must commit ourselves to study it together in groups and in church. Sunday School must understand its role and we must encourage people to be a part of it in order to grow as God expects us to grow.

As we study and learn, we can grow in commitment to do what is called for in his word.

Perhaps you have heard the story but I must share it again. The story of old has it that a group of young people hiked into the mountains for a picnic. They carried no lights and enjoying the outing to the fullest, they neglected to note that darkness was almost upon them. It became so dark that they could not see the trail and could not leave the mountain.

A mountain man had seen them go in and came to check on them. When he learned of the problem, he split a stump and handed the young people pieces of wood. "Light 'em up and they'll see you home." Several of the young people were unsure, but the old man knew that the old heart pine would give light for the entire journey.

God's Word, even today, is a "lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

Robert Self is pastor, First, Brookhaven.

BIBLE BOOK

in order to avoid public notice.

I. Jesus' return to Jerusalem for the feast

The Jewish leaders were watching for Jesus and inquiring of his whereabouts. Among the ordinary people, discussion broke out concerning Jesus. Some of the people thought he was a good man doing good things. Others felt that he was leading people astray. Regardless of how they felt about Jesus, they kept their feelings tucked carefully inside their own minds and hearts because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders.

II. Some of the people believe on Jesus

Jesus showed up at the Temple about half way through the festival and began to teach. The people were astonished at his teaching and they began to ask him questions. How was he able to speak so convincingly without the aid of formal training? What was the source of this authority?

Our Savior answered their questions with patience and kindness. The people of Jerusalem were greatly impressed by his teaching. Yet,

they were confused. Why was Jesus being allowed to teach publicly if he was the man the Jewish leaders were wanting to kill?

The people knew a few things about Jesus. They knew his name. They knew he was from Nazareth. But they had to decide for themselves whether Jesus was from God or not.

Some in the group did not believe Jesus and, perhaps being spurred on by the Jewish leaders, they tried to arrest him. Because it was not yet time for Jesus' suffering, they were unable to carry out their desire.

Still, said John, many in the assembled crowd did believe in Jesus. They likely were visitors or newcomers to Jerusalem and they were neither intimidated nor influenced by the leaders of the Jews.

III. The promise of Living Water (7:37-39)

Each day during the Feast of Tabernacles, a priest went to the pool of Siloam to obtain some water. In a golden pitcher he carried this water back to the temple and poured it on the altar as an offering to God.

As Jesus witnessed this ceremony, he once again declared himself to be the source of living water. He proclaimed that if anyone was

thirsty, he should come to him to drink and that one who drank from him would have his thirst permanently quenched.

John commented at this point that when Jesus spoke of water, he spoke of the Spirit that would be given to believers.

IV. Mixed reactions to Jesus (7:40-43)

Since the time of Moses, the people had looked for someone like Jesus. Now there was a great deal of speculation that Jesus must be the Messiah. However, the scripture taught that he would come from the seed of David and out of Bethlehem. They associated Jesus with Galilee, rather than Judea, and there was a division among the people. Though there were some who desired to arrest our Lord, no one dared.

The Jewish leaders were upset because some minor officials were unable to bring themselves to arrest Jesus. They'd never heard a man speak as Jesus had spoken.

The inevitable confrontation between Jesus and the Jewish leaders accelerated as the hatred and frustration of the leaders toward Jesus deepened daily.

Marjean Patterson is executive director, Mississippi WMU.

LIFE AND WORK

"Look at the rainbow!" He looked in the direction of the sun, for he did not know differently. God never puts rainbows in the direction of the light. There is no need for a bow where the sun is shining brightly. You and I need a rainbow when there is a dark cloud. Someone suggested, "The rainbow is the smile of God set in the still frowning weather."

As the Genesis writer interprets, you can believe in the bow because it has been placed there by God. It is a sign of promise, covenant, future and hope. The tendency with us humans is to see only difficulties in dark times and to succumb to their paralyzing effect. But you see, belief in what lies beyond the darkness, the barrier of difficulty, is the rainbow! And God put it there.

That is our hope for the ground of our hope is always in God. The person who has hope in God for the future is the person who has been

conscious of God in the past. Furthermore, the person who is conscious of God and who can face the present and the future with courage is the person who has been faithful to duty in the past during which he/she felt the presence of God. How true this was of Noah! He might not have seen the rainbow or trusted what it meant unless he had already learned through obedience that God was carrying him on.

Are we not, at last, locked into life by his and our promises? Are we not given steadiness and direction by his and our covenants? Are we not promise makers and keepers in the image of the great promise maker and keeper who is God. You see, God has made me and you that way, the promise making and keeping God. When I violate one promise, one covenant, he makes a new one with me. He keeps after me. He is faithful when I am faithless. I cannot escape him.

Can I escape the promises that bind my life together. Really, I do not want to! For I am the grateful recipient of so many promises. Life is a bow-lit, dawn-tinged covenant and there is

a final faithfulness that holds it all together in spite of my broken promises, the faithfulness of God that draws me back, that holds me, that keeps reminding me that I, too, am called to promise keeping.

The rainbow in the cloud — when did you last see one? The bow tells us again that we are not left to the devastation of our own sin. For the Christian, God's rainbow of hope shines brightest against the dark storms of Calvary. There, finally and forever, came the assurance that through any storm there is shining in all the colors of the rainbow God's promises.

The poet said it better than I: "God hath not promised skies always blue, flower-strewn pathways all our lives through; God hath not promised sun without rain, joy without sorrow, peace without pain."

"But God hath promised strength for the day, rest for the labor, light for the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy undying love . . ."

James Street is pastor, First, Cleveland.

Baptist Record

Houston church begins to FOCUS ministry on AIDS patients, families

By Ken Camp

HOUSTON (BP) — A small group at South Main Baptist Church here is reaching out in compassion to AIDS victims and their families.

The ministry group is called FOCUS — short for Focus On Caring, Understanding and Support.

"We're not on any kind of crusade. We're not trying to make a social statement," says Bill Turner, pastor of South Main Church. "Some people saw a need, we issued an invitation and a group responded."

"Almost every church in our city either has been or soon will be impacted by AIDS," says Turner, noting South Main directed its attention to AIDS following a citywide clergy consultation on AIDS involving about 50 ministers from various denominations. "The reality of this thing is that if AIDS hasn't impacted your church this year, it probably will next year," he adds.

Turner emphasizes AIDS is not an exclusively homosexual disease, and it should not be seen as divine retribution directed toward that group.

The FOCUS ministry was begun last May under the direction of Robert Carter, a counselor at West Oaks Psychiatric Hospital. Carter, a graduate of the clinical pastoral ministry program at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was working as a volunteer with

the Houston AIDS Foundation prior to beginning FOCUS.

Carter says his first task in preparing South Main for an AIDS-related ministry was education. "Most of the first month was spent in education — teaching people what AIDS was and what it wasn't. I spent a lot of time trying to answer the fears and questions people had."

FOCUS group members work in cooperation with South Main's food pantry and on-site feeding ministry to prepare and deliver food to AIDS patients, as well as visiting patients at home or in hospitals to offer help and counsel.

When patients' family members from out-of-town come to visit, FOCUS group members arrange housing for the families, opening their own homes to the visitors.

Recently, FOCUS helped to begin a support group for the families of AIDS patients which meets twice a month at South Main Church. The support group, the first of its kind in Houston, is led by two therapists from Covenant Baptist Church, a congregation dually aligned with the Southern Baptist Convention and American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

Although the purpose of the FOCUS ministry is not expressly evangelistic, group members have had occasion to offer spiritual as

well as physical ministry to patients.

"I don't have any agenda going in that I'm going to talk about the Bible and Jesus with patients, but without exception, the topic does come up eventually," says Carter. He adds that of those he has dealt with who have died, all had made their peace with God. Carter led memorial services at South Main for two AIDS victims to whom the FOCUS group had ministered, one a Catholic, the other Methodist.

Turner says the one serious drawback to the FOCUS ministry is that it has been misunderstood by some who view it as South Main's acceptance of homosexuality. He explained in a recent church newsletter column that the FOCUS ministry is meant to be a compassionate, Christian response to hurting people and should not be seen as endorsement of a homosexual lifestyle. "It's obvious that the biblical sexual ethic calls for heterosexual relationships within the context of marriage, viewing homosexuality as an unacceptable lifestyle," Turner wrote. "Not living up to the biblical ideal, however, is not restricted to one group — thus, homosexual individuals are not objects for our condemnation. They are persons of value, created in God's image."

Ken Camp writes for Texas Baptists.

capsules

Students' trip nets 145 believers

JAKARTA, Indonesia — A 74-year-old Chinese man, who had moved to Indonesia when he was 14 years old, decided to believe in Jesus Christ when, for the first time, he heard the gospel in a dialect close to his mother tongue.

The speaker was John Yuen, a student at the Baptist seminary in Singapore. Yuen was one of four seminary students who spent two weeks in Indonesia on a mission trip. During that time they led 145 people to new faith in Christ as their personal Lord.

MasterLife starts in Scandinavia

LANGESUND BAD, Norway — The first Scandinavian workshop on MasterLife discipleship training programs was held at the Langesund Bad Baptist conference center in mid-August. Twenty-five people from Norway, Sweden and Denmark attended.

A Baptist pastor from the Norway seaport city of Drammen initiated the workshop, which was coordinated by Bill Wagner, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board consultant for evangelism and church growth for Europe and the Middle East.

Nelson elected Missouri's interim executive director

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP) — Retired executive Thomas W. Nelson was unanimously elected interim executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention. Nelson, who assumed office immediately, was elected by the MBC executive board during a special called session.

The executive board meeting was held in Jefferson City following the Nov. 7 memorial service for the late Rheubin L. South. South, who died of leukemia Nov. 6, had been MBC executive director since 1975.

Nelson is best known in Missouri as the retired executive director of the Missouri Baptist Foundation, a post he held for 16 years. He also is the former pastor of First Baptist Church, Jefferson City.

Seminary offers new doctorate

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines — A Baptist seminary for Asian graduate students will work with Southern Baptists' Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary to offer the doctor of theology and religious education degrees.

Until it added the new program this summer, the Asia Baptist Graduate Theological Seminary offered nothing academically higher than the doctor of ministry and the doctor of sacred theology degrees. The graduate seminary is decentralized, with branches in six Asian Baptist seminaries.

Students come from Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Korea, Singapore, In-

donesia, Bangladesh, India and the Philippines.

West Africans form BaPSWA

MONROVIA, Liberia — Baptists from five English-speaking West African countries have formed Baptist Publications Services, West Africa (BaPSWA) to help meet the need for printed materials for evangelism, church growth and leadership training in their countries. Pat Bellinger of Illinois, Southern Baptist missionary to Liberia since 1963, was chosen as the first full-time coordinator for BaPSWA, which will relate to Baptist work in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ghana, The Gambia and Liberia. Zeb Moss, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board media consultant for Africa, led in forming BaPSWA.

British couple braving cancer

LONDON — Doreen Rogers was told she has breast cancer just three months before her husband, Tom, secretary for evangelism of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, learned he has colon cancer.

Their painful four-year bout with terminal cancer has involved numerous, sometimes overlapping hospitalizations. Do they blame God for their condition?

"Actually, the other chap got the blame," says Tom. "Each day is another day for which we thank God," he says, with his wife adding, "The grace of God has been so present throughout our illnesses."

State mission offering update

The Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering for 1985-86 totaled \$495,381.70. The goal was \$481,000.

Goal for this church year, 1986-87, is \$515,000. Income for Sept. 1-Oct. 30 totalled \$388,208.13. Income from the special offering for the same period last year was \$347,342.28.

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In battle against AIDS

Med group says pastors can help

By David Wilkinson

DALLAS (BP) — Pastors, not just physicians, will be key players in the nation's battle against AIDS, claimed members of a special AIDS Task Force at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas.

Ministers, they said, can help in two critical areas: educating the public about AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) and counseling AIDS victims and their families.

"I think ministers, above everyone else, need to be educated about AIDS," said William Sutker, a Baylor University Medical Center internist who specializes in infectious diseases.

Sutker, who has treated about 85 AIDS patients, said AIDS victims "may or may not get accurate medical information and proper medical care, but regardless, they are going to need the emotional and spiritual support that the pastor and the church can give."

AIDS results from a virus that attacks the body's immune system, leaving the victim defenseless against deadly "opportunistic diseases." The

disease already has killed 15,000 Americans, most of them homosexual men.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than one million Americans have been infected with the AIDS virus.

There is no cure for AIDS, although a new drug may prolong the life of AIDS victims by inhibiting the virus.

While homosexual men and intravenous drug abusers are the two groups most affected thus far, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop has

warned the disease is now moving increasingly into the heterosexual community. In response to the AIDS threat, Koop has called for increased sex education among teenagers and children.

"On the one hand, you must deal with the facts. AIDS is a terrible disease, and there is no cure," Sutker explained. "People need to know you can get the virus through sexual contact. On the other hand, this is a virus that is (Otherwise) hard to get. People are already paranoid about this, and it's easy to feed this kind of mass

hysteria if you don't know the facts."

Alain Marengo-Roe, director of special hematology and the blood bank at Baylor, pointed out pastors can be helpful in providing factual information about blood donations and transfusions. A person, he noted, cannot get AIDS by donating blood. In the case of blood transfusions, an effective test has been developed to screen out AIDS-infected blood so transfusions now carry little risk — about one in 100,000, according to the surgeon general's report.

Marengo-Roe urged pastors to join appeals to high-risk persons — homosexual men and intravenous drug abusers — to exclude themselves from blood donations. "Unfortunately," he said, "my impression has been that the more religious a person is, the more likely he is not to tell the truth, whereas the person who could care less about sexual morality will be truthful" in answering pre-donation screening questions.

David Wilkinson writes for Christian Action.